



I'M REALLY A SUPERSTAR

BOOK 11

Chang Yu

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I'm Really A Superstar

(我真是大明星)

by

Chang Yu

(尝谕)

Synopsis

Zhang Ye was originally a mundane college graduate with aspiring dreams to become a star, but unfortunately has below average looks and height. However one day, he woke up and suddenly found himself in a parallel world!

It's like the same world, but wait a minute...many brands, celebrities and even famous works from his world changed and are gone in this new world!

Armed with the profound literary knowledge of his previous world and a heaven-defying Game Ring that gives him magical items, stats and skills, Zhang Ye embarks on a journey to pursue his life-long dream of becoming famous!

Follow Zhang Ye as he takes the new world by storm, one plagiarized piece at a time, to hilarious reactions!

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Chapter 901: Aiya, I've Been Hacked!

At Tieba's management office.

The company's technical department was a mess!

"The baseball Tieba is not going to hold up any longer!"

"Ban those accounts!"

"Hurry, hurry!"

"I've already banned a lot of them, but there's too many!"

"It's finished, the baseball Tieba has been crashed too!"

"Oh god, why are there so many people online!"

"Quick, make another call and get all the technicians to come back!"

"Boss, it's the first day of the new year. A lot of them have returned home for the new year!"

"Zhang Ye's fans are too brutal!"

"There are also many who're just helping out! Why would the Cosmetics Tieba people join in for a conflict between Zhang Ye and the sporting world? C'mon, what has it got to do with them!"

"It's so chaotic! Everything has plunged into chaos!"

"It's the festive season, yet everyone's gone crazy!"

...

At this moment, several of the sports-related Tiebas that were still standing had given up resisting.

"Turn on the restrictions! Prevent the sockpuppets from posting!"

"I can't turn them on."

"Why?"

"They have a hacker!"

"What?"

"Seven of our moderator accounts can't login anymore!"

"Then, then what do we do?"

"...Nothing."

They simply surrendered!

They had no way to fight in this battle at all!

On Weibo.

Zhang Ye continued with his countdown: "@SportingWorld, there's just 10 minutes left. I'm waiting!"

In the Celebrity Goof Group.

Many of the celebrities were watching!

Ning Lan: "Little Zhang is so domineering it's like it's ingrained into his bones!"

Xiaodong: "Yeah, most people can't even learn from him even if they wanted to!"

Fan Wenli laughed bitterly. "Director Zhang really wants to fight it out with the sporting world today! But looking at how he is right now, I'm afraid that no one can stop him!"

Elsewhere.

The people from the sporting world were shocked by Zhang Ye's imposing manner, so all they could do now was keep mentioning the SARFT on Weibo.

Li Qi from the table tennis team: "@SARFT! Look at what's happening. Is the punishment still not being meted out yet?"

The national table tennis team's head coach, Liu Yifeng: "Leading his fans to make trouble, isn't this illegal? Isn't anyone going to do anything about it? Isn't anyone going to do anything about it?"

Han Li roared in anger on Weibo: "I call for a comprehensive ban on Zhang Ye!"

A defender on the national soccer team named Tang Hechang shouted: "Boycott such undesirable artists!"

But just after they finished making their stance known, their Tieba was crashed! Some of these athletes were not really popular and did not have their own Tieba, while those who were more famous like Han Li and Li Qi would have a Tieba dedicated to them, although the membership wasn't that high and not too many people paid attention to it. But whatever it was, those Tiebas were not spared!

Han Li's Tieba was crashed!

Li Qi's Tieba was crashed!

Tang Hechang's Tieba was crashed!

Tang...Dazhang's Tieba was crashed!

Crosstalk comedian Tang Dazhang was originally calm and quiet, with everyone laughing about and chatting lightheartedly about Zhang Ye's conflict with the sporting world, even posting a thread about it and livestreaming the conflict. Although they were at odds with Zhang Ye, with Tang Dazhang and the crosstalk world's relationship defined as his deadly enemies and often getting into quarrels, the matter today did not concern them. They did not take part in it either.

But out of nowhere, the troll army appeared, and in the blink of an eye, Tang Dazhang's Tieba was getting spammed!

"What?"

"Holy fuck!"

"Ah!"

"Why are they crashing our bar?"

"Your conflict is with the sporting world! We did not argue with you guys today!"

"Your sister!"

Tang Dazhang's fans were left in utter confusion!

However, the fan club leader, Big Saber Bro, posted a thread right at the moment before the bar got crashed, leaving all the observing netizens laughing: "Apologies, Tang Dazhang and Tang Hechang's names sounded too alike, so we mistakenly crashed your bar along with his! "

Crashed the wrong bar?

Pfft!

Tang Dazhang's fans nearly fainted!

The spectating netizens cramped up with laughter!

The collateral damage suffered by Tang Dazhang's Tieba caused it to become the most innocent victim in this historical bar crashing operation!

At this time, Zhang Ye's Weibo posted something again. "I want to say something. Today's incident isn't targeted at all the individual Tiebas and our friends participating in them. If we harmed anyone by mistake, I would like to apologize to you right here. But this operation still has to go on as I'm really unable to take this lying down! Alright then, there's still three minutes left!"

"Supporting you!"

"Supporting Teacher Zhang!"

"Yeah, we won't take this lying down!"

"Scolding us first and then demanding for us to apologize? Fuck!"

"Supporting Teacher Zhang!"

"Even a clay figurine retains some heat!"

The sporting world's people were red in the face!

What about the SARFT?

Didn't they say they would deal with this severely?

Weren't they going to review the complaints and give an immediate answer?

Everything had come down to this, so why hadn't anyone said anything yet!

There were only two minutes left until the deadline set by Chief

Qian was up!

One minute left!

30 seconds...

10 seconds...

5 seconds...

Operation Crash the Bar also ended with this.

Everyone was staring at the time and waiting for the SARFT to make an announcement!

But then, then there were no more thens!

Many of the people from the sporting world were mentioning the SARFT countless times in shock, but did not get any reply as their complaints all sank into the sea!

Liu Yifeng was stunned. "Why?"

Han Li asked: "Why is this happening?"

Li Qi said: "Didn't...didn't they say they were reviewing it?"

No one knew what was going on!

The deadline of the threat had passed and Zhang Ye was still unaffected!

Famous movie star Ning Lan was surprised at this.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli wore bewildered expressions.

The executive director of Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala, Chang Xiaoliang, was shocked.

The netizens were also astounded and uncertain about what was going on.

"Huh?"

"Nothing is happening?"

"Everything is fine now?"

"The SARFT...aren't bothering with this issue?"

"Hahahahaha!"

"There was nothing to be afraid of in the first place, we were just scaring ourselves!"

"Yeah, the lines in Teacher Zhang's skit were written to satirize the bootlicking phenomenon these days. This performance carries a very deep meaning and also generates a positive message, so how can it have any problems?"

"This is great!"

"Teacher Zhang is fine!"

"It was a false alarm, a false alarm!"

"What about that Sports Administration chief?"

"Oh yeah, where is he? Why has he disappeared?"

"He was behaving quite insolently when he appeared, acting all high and mighty, making me think that he really had something up his sleeves!"

"Didn't you tell Teacher Zhang to try and see what would happen if he didn't apologize? Teacher Zhang has tried that by now! So can I ask...what then?"

At this point, the battle's outcome was decided!

The strong voices of denouncement from the sporting world were met with a strong defeat. In this moment, quite a number of athletes quietly went offline.

It was terrible!

They had lost so terribly!

The onlooking netizens were all clapping in appreciation of what they saw today!

"That was so fun!"

"Yeah, it was truly a battle worthy of being called a classic!"

"'Black New Year's Day' will definitely go down into the annals of history!"

"My drama meter is peaking! If I can witness such an exciting scolding battle every day, I will die without regrets!"

"Today, Zhang Ye has once again proven his fan's cohesiveness!"

"Zhang Ye was so domineering today! He crushed his opponents with just his momentum alone!"

"How satisfying!"

"This battle was well fought!"

The battle ended.

The Tieba authorities were currently cleaning up the mess from the battle.

Weibo's moderators had also started to delete a massive amount of comments with vulgarities in them.

However, the coaches and players of the national table tennis team who were the cause of all these events were utterly unable to accept the outcome. They couldn't figure out why the SARFT had suddenly gone quiet!

No way!

They couldn't just leave it this way!

This was not something they could afford to lose!

Han Li said angrily from the embarrassment: "The SARFT are going to wash their hands of this? Then we will report this to the cyber police!"

Li Qi's eyes lit up. "Yeah, he instigated the netizens into causing trouble and crashing so many bars. This is an act of Internet abuse,

so the Internet Surveillance Bureau will surely take on the case!"

"Let's make a complaint!"

"Mention the Internet Surveillance Bureau on Weibo!"

The table tennis team's people hurriedly went to make their complaints!

However, they would probably never know that the previous violation they had reported to the SARFT's department was actually under the jurisdiction of Deputy Chief Wu—who was also Zhang Ye's girlfriend. And now, the Internet Surveillance Bureau they were making their complaints to was headed by one of the world's most famous hackers and cyber police officers, Officer Fan Yingyun—who was also the leader of Zhang Ye's Fan Club! The earlier scolding battle and the spam flooding operation was basically led by this female cyber policewoman from the Internet Surveillance Bureau! Fortunately, the table tennis team and everyone from the sporting world did not know of these facts, or else they might really have vomited blood for three days straight!

When the netizens saw this, they were angered once more!

"They're not done yet?"

"Still making complaints?"

"Haven't you people embarrassed yourselves enough already?"

"What the hell!"

"Teacher Zhang, be careful!"

"This is no trifling matter! We've had scolding battles and spam flooding operations before too, but those were all incited and organized by the netizens themselves. But this time, it happened under Teacher Zhang's command, so if he gets called out for that, this may become a big deal!"

"Ah?"

"Then what should we do?"

"Teacher Zhang, quickly delete your posts!"

"Yeah, hurry up and delete those posts from earlier. Just do it!"

"It wouldn't help even if he deletes them! There's a log for sure!"

A lot of fans were starting to worry again.

When Zhang Ye saw this, he did a little bit of work on his computer with the aid of the Network Technology Experience Books he had eaten in the past. He modified some stuff here, then added some stuff there. Finally, with a nod of his head, he gave Yao Jiancai a call.

"Old Yao, there's something I need your help with."

...

Very soon, Yao Jiancai's Weibo suddenly posted: "Hello, everyone, this is Zhang Ye. Aiya, my account was hacked by someone. What just happened anyway? @Weibo Please help me reset my password. I've already sent in a request."

Following that, an account under the official Weibo replied: "Hello, Teacher Zhang Ye. We just checked and saw that your account was logged into from the United States. The password was indeed changed, so we will need to PM you to verify your identity and cell phone number to help you with the reset."

Zhang Ye on Yao Jiancai's Weibo: "Thank you. That is great, I can finally get back my Weibo account! Also, I would like to say that I really condemn the theft. They're way too brazen!"

Hacked?

You were hacked?

Ning Lan: "..."

Chen Guang was stunned!

Liu Yifeng was dumbfounded!

Han Li vomited blood!

Chang Xiaoliang fainted!

When everyone saw this statement, they nearly facepalmed themselves as ten thousand strings of "fuck you" flashed across their eyes! Everyone couldn't help screaming in their heads: "You're even scorning the hackers now? Fuck, you're the one who is brazen! No one else in the world is more brazen than you!"

What a familiar scene this was!

What a sense of déjà vu this held!

A celebrity's exclusive excuse—getting hacked!

No one in the sporting world had expected Zhang Ye to pull off such a classic trick at this point of time! You were hacked? Then about those comments and insulting posts from earlier? Who else but you could have written them? Now that you're done with the scolding and the matter has been put to rest, you're fucking acting innocent by claiming that you've been hacked? And you even said it with an "aiya"?

Aiya, your sister!

They were all outraged by the brazenness of Zhang Ye!

Chapter 902: A-list?

The next day.

On the second morning of the Spring Festival.

Having slept enough, Zhang Ye woke up naturally. He looked at his watch then pulled aside the blanket, yawned widely, and shouted into the living room, "Mom, what's for breakfast?"

His mother's voice came through the door.

"You're up?"

"Uh-huh."

"Breakfast is dumplings."

"What's the filling?"

"Chives, do you like that?"

"Hai, I'll just make do with whatever."

"What do you mean by make do with whatever? If you don't want to eat them, then don't eat!"

After squabbling for a bit, Zhang Ye put on his socks and turned on his cell phone which he turned off the night before to charge. As it had been a chaotic night, there were too many updates and calls from his friends, so Zhang Ye didn't bother keeping up with all that and simply turned it off when he went to bed. As a result, when he turned it back on, he suddenly received a flood of messages that were mostly sent to him late at night. Moreover, most of the messages sounded quite baffling to him and he couldn't understand what was going on.

Dong Shanshan's text: "That was really unexpected from you yesterday, but congratulations anyway, old classmate."

Yu Yingyi's text: "Zhang'er, congratulations in advance! I was watching the scolding battle throughout, you were awesome!"

Yao Jiancai: "Why is your phone off? Hahahaha, you were awesome. This scolding battle was really not for nothing! Your popularity really was gained through all that scolding!"

Hou Ge: "Teacher Zhang, congratulations in advance."

Fan Wenli: "Although we still don't know the exact figure, I'll congratulate you first anyway."

Chen Guang: "After the data is confirmed, our The Voice program team should get together for a meal."

Congratulations?

What are they congratulating me for?

What's this data they're talking about?

Zhang Ye did not understand and replied to them: "What do you mean by this? What are you guys talking about?"

The others probably slept late and weren't awake yet, so there was no response from them even after a long time. As Zhang Ye did not wish to disturb them by calling them, he got out of bed to brush his teeth, then went to eat breakfast.

Chenchen was playing games on her new cell phone.

Zhang Ye sat down and slapped her upside the head. "You only know how to play games!"

Chenchen did not even bother with him and just said straight in the direction of the kitchen, "Grandma, Zhang Ye hit my head."

Zhang Ye was angered into amusement. "You've even learned how to tattle on me now?"

Chenchen looked at him. "—Hur hur."

"What's going on here?" His mother immediately appeared, holding a bowl of steaming hot dumplings as she glared at him.

"Don't keep hitting the child's head, or else I'll beat you up."

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, "She only knows to play games day in, day out."

His mother's next words left Zhang Ye with nothing to say. "That's still better than you fighting with people every other day!"

Zhang Ye: "..."

His mother snorted, "Did you get into another shouting match with the sporting world last night?"

Zhang Ye made a terse noise in acknowledgment.

Chenchen pouted. "Zhang Ye, you're really childish."

"See." His mother said, "Chenchen also knows how childish that was. You're a grown-up, yet you aren't as sensible as the child is and only know how to scold people!"

Zhang Ye quibbled, "That's part of my job requirements."

The clattering of keys opening the door jangled. It was his father who just returned from outside.

Zhang Ye looked over to the doorway. "Dad, where'd you go?"

"I went to buy the newspapers." His father was holding a thick stack of newspapers in his hands.

Zhang Ye exclaimed, "Did you go on a shopping spree?"

His father removed his shoes after stepping into the house and said, "I usually buy the newspapers that have your news in them. When I saw more than 20 newspapers with your news in them today, I bought them all at once."

Zhang Ye said, "Let me have a look."

His mother nagged, "Finish eating first, the dumplings have already gone cold!"

Taking the newspapers from his father, Zhang Ye stuffed a dumpling into his mouth and read the news as he ate. When he saw what was written, Zhang Ye was tickled and nearly spat out the dumpling in his mouth!

"Beijing TV's Spring Festival Gala wins the viewership ratings championship for the first time!"

"'A Letter to Home' earns an honorable spot on the Top Chinese Music Chart!"

"Zhang Ye and Yao Jiancai's crosstalk routine, 'Everything is

Great,' receives rave reviews. Audience broke down in tears at the venue!"

"'Playing it Up' targets the table tennis team!"

"The largest scolding battle of the year began last night!"

"Zhang Ye engages in verbal spar with the sporting world! An earth-shattering battle!"

"Sports-related Tiebas wiped out last night!"

"Tang Dazhang's Tieba caught in 'crossfire'!"

"Zhang Ye claims: 'Aiya, my account was hacked!'"

"The 'account hacker' has once again ended up as the scapegoat!"

"No punishments have been meted out by the SARFT yet!"

All of these were the events from yesterday. The timeliness of news reporting by the traditional newspapers was not really that good. As Zhang Ye had performed his acts on Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala at night, the daytime newspapers were already published and distributed. Only the online media outlets quickly followed up with his breaking news while the traditional newspapers had to wait until this morning to summarize yesterday's news.

When the television was switched on, the news was reporting about Zhang Ye as well.

"Last night, after being denounced by the crosstalk world last year, the sporting world has now declared war on Zhang Ye as well. Numerous sports stars and coaches, such as Liu Yifeng, Han Li, Li Qi, Tang Hechang, and several others fired off one after another at him. The scolding battle spread all over Weibo and flowed over to several dozen Tieba forums..."

Ring, ring, ring.

His cell phone rang.

It was the executive director of Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala, Chang Xiaoliang.

He quickly swallowed the dumpling in his mouth and answered the call while mumbling: "Hi, Director Chang."

Over on the other end, Chang Xiaoliang laughed heartily, in high spirits. "Hahaha, Teacher Zhang, you're awake already?"

Zhang Ye put down his chopsticks. "Ah, yes, I'm eating breakfast right now."

Chang Xiaoliang got straight to the point. "The viewership rating

for our Spring Festival Gala last night is out!"

"How did we do?" Zhang Ye actually knew already from the newspapers.

Chang Xiaoliang said: "Without a doubt, we were first. It even exceeded the viewership rating of the second place Liaoning TV Spring Festival Gala by a lot. In third place and fourth place are Mango TV and Dragon TV respectively, while Zhejiang TV was placed fifth."

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "That's great then."

Chang Xiaoliang asked: "Did you see the viewership ratings for your acts?"

"Is it out yet?" replied Zhang Ye, interested.

Chang Xiaoliang gave a sound of acknowledgment and sighed with satisfaction. "The viewership ratings of your two acts on Beijing TV's Spring Festival Gala were the highest, even when compared with all the other Spring Festival Galas last night. The nationwide viewership of 'Everything is Great' was 3.77% while the nationwide viewership of 'Playing it Up' was 4.01%. They have broken all the records of the provincial stations' Spring Festival Galas over the years! You might not know this, but when many of the industry insiders saw your viewership ratings, they were all shocked for a long time and regretted not inviting you to appear on their station's Spring Festival Gala this year!"

Zhang Ye was also frightened. "That high?"

A popular show like A Bite of China could only achieve a highest rating of 2.98% in the nationwide viewership ratings, while Zhang Ye's performance on the Spring Festival Gala had actually broken 4%. But it couldn't be compared with those viewership ratings of over 10, 20, or even 30% on Central TV's Spring Festival Gala. After all, even though it was harshly criticized by a lot of people, no matter how terrible the acts were to watch, Central TV's Spring Festival Gala was still Central TV's Spring Festival Gala. This status was something that could never be shaken by anyone. But among the provincial stations' Spring Festival Gala, the viewership ratings of Zhang Ye's two acts were considered very heaven-defying, sweeping aside all the other performances without any of them coming close!

"We are the champions of the viewership ratings!" Chang Xiaoliang exclaimed: "My objectives for this year can be considered to have been completed successfully. I did not let down the station's the trust and expectations they put in me!"

Zhang Ye said: "Congratulations, Director Chang."

Chang Xiaoliang was taken aback, then laughed and said: "Why are you congratulating me? I should be the one congratulating you instead."

Zhang Ye recalled something and asked: "Oh yes, there was a group of people congratulating me in advance this morning, what were they talking about? I reread those messages over and over but I still don't get it."

"Don't you know about it yet?"

"What should I know about?"

"Have you not seen the Celebrity Rankings Index?"

"Uh, I didn't see it as I went to sleep immediately after the scolding battle last night."

"Take a look then. I believe you won't be too far off from the A-list rankings."

"Huh?"

After hanging up, Zhang Ye quickly browsed through the overall popularity scores of the Celebrity Rankings Index which was updated at midnight. The moment he looked at it, he could not find his name in the rankings at all. When he searched for his own name, a message appeared, saying, "Zhang Ye: Ranking pending."

Pending?

His ranking was not shown?

Zhang Ye was suddenly enlightened. Only then did he realize why everyone was congratulating him in advance.

The ranking system of this world was fairly advanced and professional, with the system automatically recording the discussion popularity of each celebrity, the value of their work, the awards they won, and other factors to arrive at a base score that would then be converted into an overall score to rank them accordingly. But a computer system was still a computer system after all and there would be times when it would malfunction. For example, on more than one occasion in the past, when some of the C-or D-list celebrities shot to fame overnight due to their appearance on Central TV's Spring Festival Gala, it resulted in a direct jump for them onto the B-list rankings. When that occurred, the system would have a chance of hanging due to an overly large increase of popularity scores causing the processing to peak and the system becoming unable to handle the calculations. That was why this pending status was shown in place when it happened. It would require human input the next day to assist the system to recalculate the scores to display the most accurate rankings.

Anyway, a pending status was definitely a good thing. It meant that the popularity and exposure figures generated by Zhang Ye yesterday were too great. After the manual assessment, there would definitely be a large increase!

Zhang Ye's previous B-list ranking was at fourth place, which he had just recently been promoted to, so the gap between him and third place was still very wide. In the B-list rankings, especially at the top few places, the popularity and fame required to advance to the next ranking was quite huge!

How many places would he rise with this massive increase in popularity?

To third place on the B-list rankings?

Or second place?

Or could it be first place?

Perhaps even...

Zhang Ye was extremely excited and did not dare to think any further. "Dad, Mom, I've got something to tell you. Haha, my popularity has risen again and there might even be an explosive increase this time!" He explained the situation to them.

His mother was also excited. "Is that true?"

Upon hearing this, his father said in a speechless manner, "You can even gain popularity by scolding people?"

"Did you forget?" His mother interjected, "When our son went from the C-list to the B-list rankings, didn't he do so by scolding others?"

His father: "...It seems like that was the case."

Zhang Ye nearly fainted. "I also performed in a crosstalk and skit last night that set new viewership rating records for the provincial stations' Spring Festival Galas in recent years! Why are you both

insisting that I always do it by scolding people?"

Beside him, Chenchen ate a dumpling and looked up at him. "Hur hur."

His mother asked, "So when will the rankings be out?"

Zhang Ye answered, "They should be out soon. I'm sure that they'll be released during the day."

The more his mother thought about it, the happier and more excited she became. She said, "You were at fourth place on the B-list rankings. If you continue moving up further, won't you be really close to getting into the A-list?"

...

Meanwhile.

The outside world was also paying close attention to Zhang Ye's popularity ranking!

The media reporters' concentration was at their maximum!

Many of the celebrities in the entertainment industry also couldn't tear their eyes away!

Chapter 903: Becoming an A-lister!

On Weibo.

The so-called "Black New Year's Day" epic battle had ended, the Weibo popularity of it falling by quite a lot today. Of course, this also had to do with everyone staying up late to scold people and watching the spectacle last night. As it was still very early in the morning and the second day of the Spring Festival was a rest day, most people were still not up yet.

"Is anyone around?"

"Where are all the brothers and sisters who did battle together yesterday?"

"yawns I just woke up."

"Same. What's up?"

"Teacher Zhang's popularity ranking is currently pending!"

"Huh?"

"Really?"

"Holy shit, there's going to be a breakthrough in his popularity then!"

"Teacher Zhang's popularity score is going to increase again? How much will it increase by?"

"Of course his popularity score will increase. Just the crosstalk and skit acts alone have become very popular with the people. I have a link here for everyone to watch. It's the viewership stats of all the acts on the provincial stations' Spring Festival Gala yesterday. First and second place are both Zhang Ye's acts, and coupled with the entry of 'A Letter to Home' on the Top Chinese Music Chart and the humorous Weibo insults that mocked the sporting world, which led to that earth-shattering battle with them last night, his popularity score will definitely experience a huge surge!"

"Yeah, how many people in the country would not know Zhang Ye's name by now? Moreover, it has reached the point where people not only know about his name, they also become his die-hard fans. For example, my attention on Zhang Ye before this was not worth a mention at all. I used to liked him, but did not pay much attention to him or follow his news daily. But now? Ever since last night, I've started paying attention to Zhang Ye's Weibo and joined his Tieba fan club to fight alongside him. I even kept refreshing for online news about him, and if I saw any news with his name on it, I would click on the link. When I saw anyone speaking ill of Zhang Ye, I would go up to them and scold them. I believe that was what many people were doing as well!"

"Haha, yeah, me too!"

"Zhang Ye was so cool yesterday!"

"Right, this is the first time I've seen a celebrity with such a fucking domineering air to him! Standing firm against a sporting world chief and numerous sports star champions, he even won in the end! How awesome!"

"What rank do you think Teacher Zhang will reach this time?"

"Second place on the B-list?"

"I think he'll become first place on the B-list!"

"That will be difficult. The second place celebrity on the B-list rankings is currently Dongdong, team leader of the most popular domestic girl group. Her popularity score is very high. Furthermore, she gains additional popularity from the group's popularity, so it won't be that easy to surpass her."

The netizens discussed this.

...

Elsewhere.

In the Celebrity Goof Group.

Xiaodong sent a crying emoji. "Is anyone awake yet?"

Soon after, Fan Wenli replied: "I just woke up."

Xiaodong: "Looking for some moral support!"

Huo Dongfang also appeared. "What's the matter, Xiaodong?"

About eight people gradually came online. "Why are you crying?"

Finally, Xiaodong said: "Teacher Zhang Ye's popularity score is currently pending and not displayed. He was fourth place previously on the B-list whereas I'm second place. I think I'm in danger! cries!"

Fan Wenli: "pats head to comfort you."

Chen Guang laughed and said: "That won't happen, right? Fourth place is still quite far from you."

Xiaodong sent another crying emoji. "In the past, I thought it was quite far away and felt that it would be a long time before Teacher Zhang would catch up, but I really don't think it's that far anymore."

Fan Wenli said: "Aren't you all going on tour soon? When the album for the tour comes out, your popularity will definitely rise dramatically. You can then push for the A-list when you release your new songs next year!"

Ning Lan was online too. "That's right! Xiaodong, I believe in you!"

Chen Guang: "Go, Xiaodong! I believe in you. Eliminate Zhang Ye."

Huo Dongfang: "Go, Xiaodong! I believe in you. Eliminate Zhang Ye."

Fan Wenli: "Go, Xiaodong! I believe in you. Eliminate Zhang Ye."

A group of people followed along and gave their reply as well.

Xiaodong quickly said: "Thank you, thank you, everyone, for your encouragement."

Then, Zhang Ye appeared. He sent a long string of dots.

Chen Guang immediately said: "Go, Zhang Ye! I believe in you. Eliminate Xiaodong."

Fan Wenli: "Go, Zhang Ye! I believe in you. Eliminate Xiaodong."

Huo Dongfang: "Go, Zhang Ye! I believe in you. Eliminate Xiaodong."

It was that same group of people who replied before this.

Zhang Ye nearly fainted!

Xiaodong vomited at least three liters of blood!

Xiaodong shouted: "You people are so two-faced!"

Ning Lan: "Hahahahaha!"

This chat group named Goof Group really lived up to its name.

...

At home.

His mother kept asking, "Is it out yet? Is it?"

His father said in speechless manner, "Will you give it a rest? Aren't you being a little too irritating?"

"How can I not be concerned about this major event?" His mother stared at his father.

Zhang Ye refreshed the rankings again, then laughed and said, "It's not out yet, so let's wait a little longer."

Incidentally, he suddenly thought of Old Yao and Shanshan's rankings, so he took some time to check them out. When he saw it, Zhang Ye was shocked for a moment. He realized that Yao Jiancai and Dong Shanshan's popularity scores had surged too after last night!

The two of them were on the C-list rankings!

It was easy to explain for Yao Jiancai as he had been in the industry for over 20 years. He was involved with crosstalk routines and acted in movies. That in and of itself was an accumulation of popularity. This accumulation was many times more compared to Zhang Ye, so it was only normal that Old Yao's past works had accumulated enough popularity for him to be successful in the present. But Dong Shanshan being promoted into the C-list rankings at this time made Zhang Ye quite startled. However, after careful thought, it was not actually that shocking either. Although Shanshan did not have many works behind her, her conditions were simply just too good! She was blessed with good looks and a sexy figure, especially that long pair of legs. Not many people in the entertainment industry could compete with her on that. She was born with this advantage and was a good sapling for the entertainment industry. In the entertainment industry, a person's figure and appearance would also be considered an individual's abilities, so they weren't considered something despicable or disgraceful at all. This was because the entertainment industry was different from other professions!

Zhang Ye hurriedly made some calls to give his congratulations.

Du, du, du. The call was answered.

"Who is this?" Yao Jiancai still sounded asleep.

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "It's me. I'm calling to congratulate you. Your popularity has gone up again."

Yao Jiancai said: "Little Zhang, haha. It has increased by quite a bit. I already saw that last night and wanted to call you, but your cell phone was off!"

Zhang Ye said happily: "Great. As the best duo, we've gained quite a lot this time. Shanshan did even better than us and has been promoted to the C-list rankings. Although her ranking is near the bottom of the list, she is still considered a C-lister now!"

"I saw it." Yao Jiancai said: "She has a better prospect than us since she has the bearing of an A-list celebrity."

Zhang Ye replied: "You make it sound like I don't have that."

Yao Jiancai burst into laughter. "What kind of a bearing of an A-list celebrity do you have?"

Zhang Ye said: "I don't have the looks, but it will still happen soon."

Yao Jiancai laughed and said: "You can try to push your advance

this year, but it'll still depend on luck."

"Yeah." Zhang Ye declared: "My goal for this year is to try to aim for the A-list rankings. In the past, countless experts and people from the entertainment industry said that my unconventional way of being a celebrity would come to an end upon reaching the forefront of the B-list rankings, that I wouldn't be able to advance any further than this. Ha, but I really don't believe that shit!"

Yao Jiancai said: "Let's see how much you can rise after your pending status is confirmed. Is it out yet?"

"It's not, I'm still waiting..." Just as he said that, he suddenly heard his mother clamoring next to him.

His mother, who was constantly refreshing her cell phone's browser, shouted, "It's out! Son! The ranking is out!"

Zhang Ye was startled and said into his cell phone: "I think it's out. I'll take a look first. Bye."

Yao Jiancai returned: "OK, I'll take a look too."

...

On Weibo.

"It's out!"

"Zhang Ye's popularity score has been released!"

"Quick, go and see!"

"What's the situation now?"

"What place is he on the B-list rankings?"

"Holy shit! Holy shit! Holy shit!"

"Heavens!"

"What's going on? What are you holy shitting for? And why are you shouting heavens? Could Zhang Ye have really overtaken Dongdong?"

"Come and see quickly! What the hell! This is crazy! This is totally crazy!"

The Internet blew up in an instant!

...

Celebrity Goof Group.

Ning Lan: "It's out!"

Chen Guang also shouted: "The rankings index has been updated!"

However, the many celebrities who saw the rankings were all shocked!

Fan Wenli was dumbfounded. "This..."

Chen Guang: "Holy shit!"

Huo Dongfang gasped: "This is..."

Xiaodong: "...@*&\$*)(*\$)(@!!!"

...

At home.

His mother was also shouting, "Son! Quick, take a look at this! Look at this!"

His father came over and said, "Stop shouting, you're disturbing the neighbors."

"What's the matter, Mom? How much did my popularity score

increase by?" Zhang Ye quickly took out his cell phone to look at the latest updated B-list celebrity rankings and was stunned by what he saw!

What does this mean?

Why isn't my name on it yet?

Zhang Ye said helplessly, "Mom, don't know how to use a cell phone? It's still not updated yet, my name isn't there at all."

His mother said ecstatically, "It is! It is!"

Zhang Ye was stunned. Suddenly, he thought of a seemingly impossible possibility and immediately picked up his cell phone excitedly again and tapped on the A-list celebrity rankings!

He browsed to the next page!

And the next page!

And further to the next page!

Finally, he saw his own name at the last spot!

Zhang Ye was dumbfounded!

He was totally dumbfounded without any mental preparation at all!

The A-list?

He had become an A-list celebrity just like that?

Chapter 904: Becoming An A-lister Even Without A Proper Job?

At Ha Qiqi's house.

After just waking up, she received a call from Little Wang, only to hear her shouting and yelling on the other end.

Little Wang screamed, "Ahhh!"

Ha Qiqi said in a speechless manner: "Who stepped on your foot?"

"Director Ha! Director Zhang has become an A-lister!" Little Wang exclaimed.

"What A-lister?" Ha Qiqi was startled.

"An A-lister! You know, an A-lister!" Little Wang yelled.

Ha Qiqi finally realized what was going on and asked in a stunned manner: "Are you saying that Director Zhang has gotten into the A-list rankings?"

"Yea!" Little Wang was extremely excited. "He's so awesome! He's amazing!"

Ha Qiqi immediately sat up and said in surprise: "How is that

possible? Wasn't he just fourth place on the B-list rankings before this? How did he suddenly get into the A-list rankings?"

...

Beijing Times.

At the entertainment section's editorial department.

An exclamation of "holy shit" loudly reverberated in the office!

"Zhang Ye...has become an A-lister!"

"Ah?"

"What?"

"That's not possible!"

"Did they make a mistake?"

"Him? A-lister? How could he become an A-lister so quickly?!"

"Fuck, let me see!"

"This wicked wretch can also become an A-lister?"

...

The people at Central TV also found out about the news instantly!

Xu Yipeng was stunned!

Chen Ye was stunned!

Jiang Yuan was stunned!

Those who were on the program team of the Spring Festival Gala were also stunned!

"Zhang Ye be-became an A-lister!"

"Uh..."

"This..."

Silence!

Or rather, they were cursing in their minds!

Even he can become an A-lister? He really became an A-lister? Is

there any justice? Is there any law? What has this fellow done? He had not done any proper work before at all. Taking into account those current A-list celebrities in the entertainment industry, the majority of them were either singers or actors. Hosting was considered an obscure profession in the entertainment industry. Furthermore, Zhang Ye did not even do his main job as a host properly. Instead, he became a director, involved himself in the field of mathematics, took up positions as a university professor, piloted a plane, dabbled in calligraphy, wrote novels, composed poems, and even performed crosstalks? You have not done any proper work at all!

You can even do it like that?

You can even become a goddamn A-lister like that?

...

The media was making a racket!

The entertainment circle was making a racket!

Thousands and thousands of people were also making a racket!

When they saw the rankings, everyone's first reaction was disbelief!

Actually, wasn't that the case for Zhang Ye too? Zhang Ye was even more shocked that he became an A-list celebrity than the

media, the netizens, and his colleagues. After working so hard for his goal, he had finally reached it just like that? Zhang Ye did not feel any sense of realism in this as he stood rooted to the spot for a long time, not even believing it himself!

His mother laughed loudly and said, "Son! You're really an A-lister now! Although it's only the last spot!"

His father was also stunned.

Chenchen came out and said, "Zhang Ye, do you need me to step on your foot?" Saying that, she actually stepped right onto his foot.

"Why are you stepping on my foot?" Zhang Ye said speechlessly to her.

Chenchen calmly replied, "I'm just letting you know that you aren't dreaming."

Pfft!

This bad kid!

Zhang Ye was angered into amusement. "Looks like I have to thank you then."

Chenchen acknowledged, "You're welcome."

Suddenly, the phones rang noisily!

His mother's cell phone rang first, followed by a lively ringing tone of Zhang Ye's cell phone, then Chenchen's cell phone also rang at almost the same time. The house phone in the living room rang as well!

There was ringing sounds everywhere!

His mother answered and said joyfully: "Hello...aiyo, Mengmeng...that's right, that's right, your brother has been promoted to the A-list. We just found out about it too....Right, right....Thank you....Your brother is busy answering calls now, I'll get him to call you back later....Is your mom at home? She is? Get her on the phone...."

His father picked up the house phone. It was from an old neighbor. "Hello? Brother Liu....Yes, he's an A-lister now....Thank you, thank you, congratulations....Let me thank you on Little Ye's behalf....Alright, OK...come over to our home when you're free!"

Chenchen was talking to her classmate on the phone. "Hello? Who's this? Oh...Black Widow."

Everyone was busy answering their phones.

Zhang Ye moved far away from them and went back into his bedroom to answer the calls.

The first call was from Dong Shanshan.

Dong Shanshan immediately said: "Are you for real?"

Zhang Ye laughed heartily: "Maybe, probably, it's most likely real!"

Dong Shanshan said: "I saw your popularity score pending in the middle of the night and knew that you would definitely leap up in the rankings. I even sent a message to congratulate you in advance, but who knew that you'd leap by this much? This is not just about jumping several spots in the rankings anymore, but a direct promotion into the A-list?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "You were very impressive too. You're now a big shot C-list celebrity!"

"That still can't be compared to you." Dong Shanshan chuckled. "How many years has it been since any of the graduates from Media College have become an A-list celebrity? Three years? Or five years? Who could have expected that it would be you to achieve that!"

Media College specialized in the broadcasting major, and in this specialty, they were ranked number one in the country without others coming close. But because of this, those who graduated from Media College found it difficult to gain any great achievements. It was not easy for a host to stand out in the entertainment industry as they were not mainstream celebrities. And in the other majors, such as singing, directing, and acting,

Media College was unable to compare with the Central Conservatory of Music, Central Academy of Drama, and Shanghai Theater Academy. But today, after a few years, Media College had finally produced another A-list celebrity. This undoubtedly made the students of Media College very excited!

After hanging up with Dong Shanshan, many of his other friends called as well.

His beloved Teacher Su of Media College was similarly excited.

"Little Zhang, good job! You did great!"

"It was all thanks to Teacher Su's guidance!"

"Knock it off. Which school or teacher can produce such a reckless celebrity like you? That's all your own hard work!"

"Man, why does it sound like you're lecturing me?"

"Hahaha. Kid, you've brought a lot of pride to our alma mater this time! Good! Very good!"

"Thanks, Teacher Su."

"President Hu contacted me earlier and wanted me to congratulate you on behalf of the college."

"Oh, then please give my thanks to President Hu!"

A while later, the people from Peking University also called!

"Congratulations, Little Zhang!"

"Thank you, Dean Pan!"

"Our mathematics field has produced an A-list celebrity this time around! Hahaha!"

"You can even count this?"

"Why not? Aren't you a Peking University math professor?"

"—Yes."

"Then of course it's counted since you're part of Peking University's Mathematics Department!"

"Uh, alright then."

When the Chinese Department's Dean Chang and Secretary Zhen called, they said something similar as well.

"Little Zhang, congratulations to you. To think that a teacher from Peking University's Chinese Department could become an A-

list celebrity! When are you free to come back? We'll hold a celebration for you when you're here!"

"Thank you, Dean Chang, I'll treat everyone when the time comes!"

"I'll hold you to your words then!"

It could be imagined that when Peking University started its school term this year, the entrance of the Chinese Department would definitely have a banner hung with words like "A warm congratulations to Peking University Associate Professor Zhang Ye from the Chinese Department on being promoted to the A-list." Then the Math Department would hang a similar banner saying, "A warm congratulations to Peking University Associate Professor Zhang Ye from the Math Department on being promoted to the A-list"! Damn, hopefully they won't end up fighting when that time comes!

The calls kept coming!

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli called to offer their congratulations!

A call from songstress Zhang Xia.

A call from skit actress Ci Xiufang.

A call from Qu Haiying who was hospitalized at the moment.

Five calls!

Ten calls!

Twenty calls!

Thirty calls!

Finally, even Zhang Yuanqi gave him a call.

She did not speak much, but it left Zhang Ye in a good mood.

Old Zhang: "You're alright."

Zhang Ye: "Haha, I'm not bad."

Old Zhang: "To be honest, I was rather surprised that you managed to get into the A-list."

Zhang Ye: "I haven't come around yet from all that has happened either."

Old Zhang: "Not bad, but you're still far off from becoming an S-list Heavenly King."

Zhang Ye: "Hur hur, who knows? I might catch up to you by next year."

Old Zhang: "Sure. I'll be waiting."

The news of Zhang Ye getting promoted to the A-list had shocked and startled lots of people!

It was not very long ago that Zhang Ye was just a Media College graduate who could not find a job. He stumbled along in his journey, scolding his leaders, getting involved in fights, working on shows, piloting a plane, battling the global mathematics field, and arguing with the crosstalk and sporting worlds. The difficulties and hardships that he faced along the way could basically be compiled into a book as thick as three Journey to the West books, with an additional book of The Golden Lotus! But now, he was finally promoted to the A-list! This was an affirmation to all of Zhang Ye's efforts over the past two years. He was glad that he had chosen this path and had kept following it all the way until now!

After finishing with all the calls, Zhang Ye breathed a sigh of relief as he finally got some time to call Wu Zeqing. "Old Wu, I'm an A-lister now."

Old Wu laughed and said: "I've already seen it."

Zhang Ye said with a smile: "There's nothing else. I just wanted to thank you. I still remember clearly how no one believed in me back then. Everyone thought that I would not be able to advance

any further after I had reached the B-list rankings, that it was impossible for me to have an opportunity or the qualities to rise another level. But it was because of your encouragement that I persisted onward. Now that this bro has managed to persist thus far, I will still continue to move upwards as there are still the S-list and international stage that I want to get to. I won't be stopping here for sure!"

Old Wu said smilingly: "Then don't stop. I, too, am especially looking forward to seeing how far you can go."

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "As long as you're beside me, I can even aim for the skies!"

Chapter 905: Zhang Ye's Live Interview!

On the same day, the news was out!

The newspapers, television, and online media were all fighting to cover this piece of news!

"Zhang Ye promoted into the A-list!"

"The latest Celebrity Rankings Index!"

"The A-list Celebrity Rankings have finally been updated!"

"Zhang Ye surprisingly breaks into the A-list!"

"Can Zhang Ye maintain his ranking as an A-lister? Let us wait and see!"

"A raffish celebrity creates a miracle that won't be replicated by anyone!"

"A journey: How Zhang Ye walked his path to fame!"

"Zhang Ye: A prodigy not recognized by his industry peers!"

"Feats or faults, leave it to the future generations to judge for themselves!"

In fact, Zhang Ye was ascending to cloud nine looking at all these headlines!

The A-list Celebrity Rankings had stayed unchanged for a long time. It had always cycled between the same few people moving up and down on the list without any new entries. After all, even if one were to shoot to fame overnight, they would at most get onto the B-list. This would be in the most extreme of circumstances where a celebrity shot to fame. But to get onto the A-list? This was something that required results, with a need for background and an accumulation of popularity. A celebrity who shot to fame overnight would never be able to hold onto the status of an A-lister, which was why this ranking had been stable for such a long time. Most outsiders could never break into it!

But today, Zhang Ye had broken the stalemate. A celebrity with average looks, someone who could never depend on his looks to make a living, this person had actually managed to stumble his way to a new height. In the eyes of many, this was a miracle. If it was just the B-or C-list rankings, this would have been acceptable. But in the ranks of the A-list, which celebrity did not depend on their looks to make a living? Even if they depended on their talents and other factors, their looks were definitely still outstanding. This had become one of the prerequisites of the A-list, but with Zhang Ye's appearance on it, it had surprised everyone. For someone who had just debuted for less than two years, someone who only looked a little better than average, he had somehow been promoted into the A-list?

Although he was still ranked last.

Although his popularity was still unstable as of now.

In the afternoon, Zhang Ye received a call and left in a hurry.

...

At Central TV.

The heavens were kind today with clear skies.

When Zhang Ye arrived, Yan Tianfei's secretary was waiting for him at the entrance. The secretary was already walking up to welcome him when he spotted Zhang Ye's car arriving from afar.

"Teacher Zhang, congratulations! Congratulations to you!" the secretary said.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you very much."

The secretary immediately said, "The interview will be done on Central TV Live News. Please come with me."

Zhang Ye nodded and followed. "Alright. It won't take long, right?"

The secretary replied, "At most ten minutes, but it's a live

broadcast."

"Alright, I understand," Zhang Ye said.

The secretary laughed. "I was afraid that you wouldn't come."

Zhang Ye shrugged and remarked, "If it's a live interview with Central TV, why would I not come?"

Right now, Zhang Ye needed to solidify his position and popularity. Having just been promoted into the A-list, the newcomer clearly could not compare with the other A-listers as he wouldn't have their foundations of fame. In the short term, he couldn't compete with them, so there was no need to think about surpassing them. But for the people behind him, their popularity did not differ much from his. That previous A-lister Zhang Ye had replaced was currently at the top of the B-list rankings, so it could be said that he might still return to the A-list at any time and push Zhang Ye back down the rankings. At this time, it was Zhang Ye's most unstable and vulnerable period. He needed to solidify this place he had fought so hard for!

Since there was an interview?

And it was even a live interview on Central TV?

Then of course he had to come. Otherwise, that former A-list celebrity might just come up with something and Zhang Ye would return to the B-list the next day, becoming the most short-lived A-

lister in history.

Besides, it wasn't easy to secure this interview either!

There were a lot of going-ons behind it.

After receiving news of Zhang Ye getting promoted into the A-list, Central TV News Channel contacted Department 14 and communicated with them, hoping to arrange for a short live interview with Zhang Ye. According to convention, whenever a celebrity was promoted into the A-list, it was always considered a major event. Therefore, Central TV—being the big brother of television stations—couldn't possibly miss out on reporting such news, so they would usually arrange for a one-on-one live interview with that celebrity on the day of. But the reason why this was delayed until the afternoon was mainly because of the rather awkward relationship between Central TV and Zhang Ye. Having gone through a lawsuit, having fought and scolded each other, the people of the Central TV News Channel could not make the decision to do this interview. They had to urgently seek out the heads to communicate their intentions and hold a meeting to discuss it. It took until the afternoon before this live interview with Zhang Ye was approved, although that would be considered a good thing even with all the setbacks.

Suddenly.

In front of him, his colleagues all appeared!

"Director Zhang!"

"Director Zhang!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

Ha Qiqi, Little Wang, Tong Fu, and Huang Dandan were all here!

Zhang Ye was surprised by them and said with a smile, "Whoa, why are you all back at work on the second day of the new year?"

Ha Qiqi smiled. "We're not. We knew that you were going to come for a live interview, so we came back specifically for that. We wanted to congratulate you and to also cheer you on."

Little Wang gave him a thumbs up and said in admiration, "Director Zhang, you're so awesome! When I heard about you becoming an A-list celebrity, I was totally stunned by the news!"

"Director Zhang, treat us!"

"Yeah, you have treat us!"

"Treat, treat, treat!"

"Zhang Zuo and Wu Yi will be coming over in a while too!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Alright, don't leave then. After the

interview is done, I'll treat everyone!"

...

The outside world.

The news had long since been released.

"Zhang Ye's going to appear on Central TV's live broadcast!"

"What time?"

"It's almost time!"

"Ah, then I must definitely catch it!"

"Uh, didn't Central TV and Zhang Ye have a falling out?"

"But this is such big news. They still have to invite Zhang Ye for an interview no matter what. He's an A-list celebrity now, a big shot in the entertainment industry, so how can he still be treated like he was before? Even if Central TV dislikes him, for such a big piece of news, they would definitely have to report it!"

"It's only a ten-minute live interview? Back when Huo Dongfang rose into the A-list, he gave an interview for half an hour! They even made a special program to cover him!"

"But the key here is that it's Zhang Ye!"

"Pfft, with his relationships, how can he possibly be compared to Sect Leader Huo?"

"Hahaha, it's already considered very good that he has ten minutes!"

"Let's see if Teacher Zhang can use this chance to solidify his position. The original A-lister who was knocked down to the B-list is hot on his heels. The difference in the popularity scores is just tens of thousands!"

"Teacher Zhang, we're cheering you on!"

"You must definitely hold onto your position!"

A popularity score difference of tens of thousands of points might sound like a lot, but at this level, it would be considered very little. It could just be the difference of one song, a commercial, an interview, or an incident on Weibo. Their popularity scores were very close. Whoever would be in the A-list tomorrow was still an open question!

The interview was about to begin!

His parents turned on the television.

Zhang Ye's relatives and neighbors also tuned into Central TV News Channel.

At home, Yan Tianfei switched on his television.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli were watching.

Zhang Xia was watching.

Ci Xiufang was watching.

Dong Shanshan was watching.

Yao Jiancai was watching.

Peking University's Teacher Su Na was watching.

Central TV Department 1's Jiang Yuan, Xu Yipeng, and Chen Ye were watching.

The peers of the crosstalk world were watching.

Those from the sporting world were watching.

Zhang Yuanqi and her manager were watching.

Even Wu Zeqing was watching.

Zhang Ye's relatives, friends, colleagues, fans, even his foes, those who liked him, those who disliked him, many of these people were waiting and watching their televisions at this moment, waiting for Zhang Ye's first appearance since getting into the A-list Celebrity Rankings. They wanted to know just what he would say after getting promoted into the A-list.

...

On Central TV News Channel.

Central TV Live News began its live broadcast!

The host was a woman in her thirties. Her name was Zhang Ya, which was a rather strange name. She was a veteran host of Central TV who had even hosted News Simulcast for a period of time. She was also one of the few remaining people at Central TV who had never had any conflict with Zhang Ye. Therefore, her interviewing Zhang Ye today came as no surprise at all.

A long table.

And two chairs.

The two of them sat facing each other.

Zhang Ya put on her signature smile and announced, "We're very happy to be able to invite my colleague to today's Central TV Live News—welcome, Teacher Zhang Ye."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Hello, Teacher Zhang Ya."

"Speaking of, we were probably family 500 hundred years ago," Zhang Ya said with a smile.

Zhang Ye nodded. "Right, I heard of your great name long ago."

Zhang Ya asked, "Oh? Teacher Zhang knows of me?"

Zhang Ye chuckled. "I often watch your news shows, so in my mind, you're just like the stars in the sky!"

Zhang Ya said in surprise, "Wow, do I shine that brightly to you?"

"Hai." Zhang Ye then followed with, "Whether there's one star more or one star less, it doesn't make any difference to me."

"Pfft!" Zhang Ya, host who had anchored news shows, had always done her job with only two kinds of expressions, with a serious look or a professional smile! But today, in this process of the live broadcast, Zhang Ya had giggled because of Zhang Ye's words!

The people watching their televisions were also entertained!

"Hahahaha!"

"Aiyo, Zhang Ye is really amazing!"

"It's a live broadcast and he's still talking that way?"

"It feels like he's performing a crosstalk instead!"

"Of course! How can Zhang Ye's interviews be like the others?
Hahaha!"

"I like this! I like him so much!"

"That flamboyance can only come from someone like him!"

His mother also said in a speechless manner, "That rascal, he isn't afraid to say anything!"

On TV.

Zhang Ya laughed for a long time before finally giving a helpless expression. "I've finally had a taste of Teacher Zhang's eloquence today."

"It's just a joke, just a joke," Zhang Ye cracked.

In fact, after being together at Central TV for so long, Zhang Ya and Zhang Ye were coming face to face for the first time officially. To say that this was her first humbling experience with Zhang Ye, that was really the truth and she really did learn a little from Zhang Ye. She had interviewed countless celebrities and done countless news reporting in the past. Even for the celebrities who had just risen into the A-list, she had interviewed two of them before. When those newly promoted A-listers came here to Central TV Live News, they would tend to be serious and polite, or keep thanking their fans and family. But this was truly the first time she had come across someone like Zhang Ye who immediately cracked jokes the moment he spoke. At that instant, she wasn't too prepared and couldn't help but lose her composure. She could only smile wryly as she thought of how Zhang Ye was really different from other stars!

Chapter 906: I'm Unfamiliar With This World!

In the recording studio.

Zhang Ya smiled and said, "Teacher Zhang, let's get serious now."

Zhang Ye looked at her and said, "Did you think I wasn't serious just now?"

Zhang Ya: "..."

Zhang Ye cleared his throat and said, "Fine, I'll really be proper this time."

Zhang Ya was holding a cue card in her hand as she gave a wry smile. "After your antics, I really don't know how to host or what to ask."

In front of her was Zhang Ye, who was also an excellent host himself. When these two hosts met, neither of them really knew who would be the one asking or answering the questions.

"It's fine, you can ask me anything." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Treat it like we're chatting as friends. I'm a very casual person, so I wouldn't know what to say if it gets too formal."

Zhang Ya then said in a relaxed manner, "Alright then, let's just

treat it as if we're chatting as friends."

Zhang Ye said, "Sure."

Zhang Ya smiled and said, "Regarding the news that was just released this morning, you have officially been promoted to the A-list. I especially would like to know what your reaction was when you found out about it."

Zhang Ye threw up his hands and said with a smile, "My first reaction was to look at the sun outside the window."

Zhang Ya asked puzzled, "Did you feel that it would bring you a sunny warmth?"

Zhang Ye shook his head. "Nope."

Zhang Ya asked again, "Did you feel like you were glowing from the sun's rays?"

Zhang Ye shook his head. "It's not that either."

Zhang Ya asked in curiosity, "Then why did you look outside at the sun?"

Zhang Ye said, "I was looking to see if the sun rose from the west today."

Zhang Ya reacted, "Pfft! Just for that?"

Zhang Ye nodded his head seriously and said, "Yes, that was it."

The audience was also entertained!

"That mouth on Teacher Zhang!"

"If you were in disbelief, just say that you couldn't believe it. Why are you talking about looking at the sun!"

"Pfft, a Beijinger's bad habit of speaking nonsense has rendered me speechless!"

"Yeah, he never wants to speak properly and has to beat around the bush for some reason!"

"What an informal interview this is!"

"Haha, it's quite good that they're being informal. I like to watch Zhang Ye's teasing!"

At the recording studio.

Zhang Ya said in amusement, "Looks like you were also very surprised by this news."

Zhang Ye said, "Yes. I also read the netizens' comments and watched the reports on television. Honestly, you might not believe this. You thought you guys were surprised? I was even more surprised than all of you. Such an unpopular person like me in the entertainment industry could actually push into the A-list overnight? If you were me, would you believe it?"

Zhang Ya smiled and said, "If I were you, I wouldn't believe it either."

"That's right." Zhang Ye said, "My feelings right now are the same. That's why I really want to ask about something. Are you sure that there hasn't been a mistake?"

Zhang Ya smiled pleasantly and said, "We're sure."

Zhang Ye suddenly sat up straight and said with a smile, "Then that's great, I can finally straighten my back. I didn't dare sit up straight since I entered the recording studio as I was feeling guilty. I was afraid that someone would suddenly come in and drag me off in the middle of the broadcast, saying that there had been a mistake."

Zhang Ya laughed again for a long time.

One question.

Two questions.

Three questions.

Zhang Ya asked the questions while Zhang Ye answered them, occasionally bantering.

Very soon, the ten-minute duration was almost up.

Zhang Ya received the time update by the technical director over her headset and said, "Since the moment you debuted, you seemed like you couldn't fit in with this world and never got along with your industry peers. Up to now, despite all the doubting voices against you, you've endured and kept walking toward the stage of an A-list celebrity. I'm actually very impressed by that." Pausing, she added, "So, since we're coming to the end of our interview, do you have anything else to say to our audience? Or something you'd like to express? I'll leave the rest of the time to you."

It's already time for the closing remarks?

What should he say?

What should he express?

Zhang Ye suddenly thought of himself being in this other world and remembered his choice of choosing this path filled with disaster. He suddenly had some mixed feelings and for the first time, he organized his thoughts about his life and the situations he encountered. When he first came to this unfamiliar world, he went through many situations that forced him into silence; made him

humble; left him disappointed; needed him to be brave; infuriated him; set him against the heavens; set him against the earth; and set him against other men. He had really been through a lot.

He truly had something he wished to say.

Hence, Zhang Ye turned to the camera and "looked" at all the viewers watching their televisions and uttered softly:

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my silence.

"I still have a lot of questions

"about the south, my roots, hope, and about distance."

Zhang Ya was stunned!

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my despair.

"I still have a lot of passion

"for division, death, yesterday, and solitude."

This...

Listening to this, the viewers watching their televisions were all stunned!

Zhang Ye smiled and said:

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my deceit.

"I still have a lot of candor

"I can't do without, or let go; yet lives, and loves."

Zhang Ye smile slowly faded as he gently went on:

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my 'loneliness.

"I still have a lot to demand:

"I need comfort; to share, get upset, and tell you."

...

At home.

His parents were watching the television in shock.

When Chencheng—who was playing with her cell phone—heard Zhang Ye's voice, she also raised her head to look for the first time.

Zhang Ye's voice sounded like it came from afar, yet it felt very near.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my coldness.

"I still have a lot of feelings

"for time, the white clouds, the night, and for destiny."

...

At a villa.

Chen Guang's home.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my shirking.

"I still have a lot I long for:

"my dreams, memories, my failures, and desires."

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli looked at each other as they listened to Zhang Ye's voice. For some reason, they suddenly felt very touched and were full of admiration for him!

Good.

This poem was really good!

...

Somewhere in Beijing.

Zhang Yuanqi's home.

Zhang Yuanqi and her manager, Fang Weihong, were watching Zhang Ye on TV. The two of them were chatting and munching on sunflower seeds a while ago, but had suddenly turned quiet for some reason.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my weakness.

"I still have a lot of courage,

"renouncing loss, the gods, the Heavens, and the Earth."

Renouncing the Heavens?

Renouncing the Earth?

...

Wu Zeqing's home.

Zhang Ye's deep voice resounded through the house.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my sorrow.

"I still have a lot of delight:

"I have my being, worth, uniqueness, and meaning."

...

At Central TV Department 14.

People like Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, Yan Tianfei's secretary, and others who were waiting for Zhang Ye in their office said nothing and just stared straight at the figure speaking on TV.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my turmoil.

"I still have a lot of angles

"to move forward, look back, to leap, and stop to rest."

...

At this moment.

Thousands and thousands of viewers were staring at their televisions, listening in silence to Zhang Ye's life.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my splitting.

"I still have a lot of wholeness,

"at the least, I must fulfill myself."

About to recite the last stanza, Zhang Ye smiled again.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my selection to die or to live.

"I still have a lot of choices;

"By chance, of these two, neither of them were options."

He finished reciting.

Zhang Ya was listening to him with rapt attention.

At last, Zhang Ye smiled at the camera and host before saying,
"That is all, thank you."

The time was up.

The live broadcast signal was cut.

Zhang Ye got up to leave but suddenly heard applause coming from around him!

Zhang Ya stood up and started slowly clapping her hands.

A few of the technical directors in the studio also came to their senses and applauded loudly for Zhang Ye!

Everyone was dumbfounded by what they'd heard!

They believed that these lines were definitely not prepared by Zhang Ye beforehand!

That was why they were so dumbfounded by what they heard! As a result, they were clapping their hardest for him, even forgetting about the conflict that existed between him and Central TV!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you."

Zhang Ya was very touched and felt a mix of emotions. She said, "Teacher Zhang, I've met a lot of people and celebrities before, and heard a lot about their life experiences as well. But I feel that you are the most wonderful person amongst them."

Was it wonderful?

It probably was.

Zhang Ye flashed a smile but did not say anything. That was because he did not know how to respond to her. There were too many things that he could not say, not even to his own family. In this world, only Zhang Ye alone knew that he was...truly unfamiliar with this world! He did not belong to this world at all!

But there was something he would not waver on.

He would continue to walk down this path without stopping, until he reached the highest point of this unfamiliar world!

Original Text with Pinyin

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我安静的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒānjìng de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多问题."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō wèntí."

"问南方,问故里,问希望,问距离."

"Wèn nánfāng, wèn gùlǐ, wèn xīwàng, wèn jùlí."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我绝望的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ juéwàng de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多热情."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō rèqíng."

"给分开,给死亡,给昨天,给安寂."

"Gěi fēnkāi, gěi sǐwáng, gěi zuótiān, gěi ān jì."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我虚假的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ xūjiǎ de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多真诚."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō zhēnchéng."

"离不开,放不下,活下去,爱得起."

"Lì bù kāi, fàng bùxià, huó xiàqù, ài dé qǐ."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我孤寂的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ gūjì de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多诉求."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō sùqiú."

"需慰藉,待分享,惹心烦,告诉你."

"Xū wèijí, dài fēnxiǎng, rě xīnfán, gàosù nǐ."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我冷漠的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ lěngmò de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多动情."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō dòngqíng."

"为时间,为白云,为天黑,为天命."

"Wéi shíjiān, wéi báiyún, wéi tiān hēi, wéi tiānmìng."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我逃避的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ táobì de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多憧憬."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō chōngjǐng."

"对梦想,对记忆,对失败,对希冀."

"Duì mèngxiǎng, duì jìyì, duì shībài, duì xījì."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我卑微的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ bēiwéi de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多勇敢."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō yǒnggǎn."

"不信输,不信神,不信天,不信地."

"Bùxìn shū, bùxìn shén, bùxìn tiān, bùxìn de."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我失落的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ shīluò de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多高昂."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō gāo'áng."

"有存在,有价值,有独特,有意义."

"Yǒu cúnzài, yǒu jiàzhí, yǒu dú tè, yǒu yìyì."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我迷茫的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ mí máng de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多方向."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō fāngxiàng."

"往前走,回头望,会跳跃,会停息."

"Wǎng qián zǒu, huítóu wàng, huì tiàoyuè, huì tíngxī."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我撕裂的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ sī liè de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多完整."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō wánzhěng."

"至少,我要成全我自己."

"Zhìshǎo, wǒ yào chéngquán wǒ zìjǐ."

"我和这个世界不熟."

"Wǒ hé zhège shìjiè bù shú."

"这并非是我选择死亡或者生存的原因."

"Zhè bìngfēi shì wǒ xuǎnzé sǐwáng huòzhě shēngcún de yuányīn."

"我依旧有很多选择."

"Wǒ yījiù yǒu hěnduō xuǎnzé."

"刚巧,这两者,都不是选项之一."
"Gāngqiǎo, zhè liǎng zhě, dōu bùshì xuǎnxiàng zhī yī."

Chapter 907: The Battle For The A-list Rankings!

At Central TV.

After Zhang Ye came out of Central TV Live News, he saw Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others already waiting outside for him.

When they saw Zhang Ye, everyone congregated around him.

Zhang Zuo said, "Director Zhang, I was caught in a traffic jam on the way here. Congratulations!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you."

Wu Yi hurriedly said, "We watched your live interview just now at the office. You did really well!"

"That poem was really good!" Ha Qiqi sighed.

Little Wang even said, "Director Zhang, I nearly cried listening to that poem!"

Zhang Ye looked at his assistant and said in amusement, "Aren't you a little too easily moved?"

Department 14's Huang Dandan replied, "It's not because we're

easily moved, but that the poem was truly touching!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Alright, let's head off now. I'll be treating everyone to lunch. Let me call Director Yan to see if he has time to join us. We should all have a get-together."

But Zhang Zuo suggested, "Director Zhang, if it's a hassle, we can skip the get-together today. I think you should still have some matters to attend to for now. Who knows when the previous A-lister, Li Yu, might catch up to you again?"

Little Wang, realizing the situation, agreed, "Yeah, that's true!"

Tong Fu said, "I just checked. Your popularity score and Li Yu's popularity score are pretty close!"

Ha Qiqi considered for a moment before saying, "Director Zhang, let's just skip today's meal and take a rain check. There'll be plenty of opportunities for a get-together later. Now that Li Yu has been nudged down to the B-list, he's sure to take action. He definitely won't do nothing and there might still be a popularity battle to fight tonight, so you should be careful."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Let's go. We should just do whatever we want to do. If I get nudged back down, there's nothing I can do about it. If it's mine, it's mine. I can't force the situation either."

"I'm Unfamiliar with this World," the poem he had just recited, was thought to have originated from Bei Dao. But after some

verification, it seemed like it wasn't Bei Dao's work at all. It was more likely that it was just a fan's pastiche instead. As for who the original poet of this poem was, Zhang Ye couldn't figure it out either. He loved this poem regardless, but had never been able to find a suitable occasion to bring it out. However, he was able to fulfill that wish today and that made Zhang Ye feel like he was finally freed! He was like an alcoholic who had not had a drink in a month and was able to finally grab a bottle of Erguotou to drink to his heart's content. As such, he felt like he had been set free from his chains, and at this moment did not really care about that battle for the A-list spot.

He would just do whatever needed to be done.

And say whatever needed to be said.

And after that? Whatever goes!

...

On Weibo.

A lot of netizens were crying out and clamoring!

"I like this poem so much!"

"That's right! I really like it!"

"Why did the live interview end so quickly? Zhang Ye, say a few more words!"

"Central TV News Channel didn't allocate much time to Zhang Ye at all!"

"If Teacher Zhang were to come up with such poems every day, how great would that be!"

"I'm unfamiliar with this world. But this isn't the cause of my weakness. I still have a lot of courage, / renouncing loss, the gods, the Heavens, and the Earth."

"I was really touched! I was really touched by this!"

"This poem is absolutely the best!"

"The poem was really wonderful, but the key is that Zhang Ye's life is wonderful in the first place!"

"That's right. If this poem were recited by someone else, it would never have brought about the impact on me like it did when Zhang Ye recited it! Because this poem is talking about Zhang Ye and his life, so if it were any other? Who could have the same great ups and downs like Zhang Ye has had in his lifetime? Zhang Ye's path in the entertainment industry was truly much harder than anyone else's! That he could journey to this point, I'm not the least bit surprised. No one knows more about determination than he does!"

"This poem is really awesome!"

"Teacher Zhang is really awesome!"

After "I'm Unfamiliar with this World" was broadcast live, it immediately began to set off a wave on the Internet. There were not a lot of people who forwarded this poem, because most of the netizens felt that if this poem were written text alone, it would be wholly unable to express the impact it had on them. As such, that short ten-minute interview on Central TV Live News was forwarded like crazy instead!

10,000!

50,000!

100,000!

The comments instantaneously filled up to the point of shooting through the roof!

...

Hong Kong.

Li Yu's personal studio.

"Hurry up!"

"Send them a reminder again!"

"We must get this taken care of by today! There's no time left!"

"If we don't hit back today, our chances of getting back onto the A-list will only get slimmer and slimmer!"

"Teacher Li, we have already communicated with our partners in mainland China. Regarding the [micro movie](#), 'The Shooting,' that you took part in last month, they've agreed to move the release date to today!"

"Very good!"

"That's great! We've finally got that settled!"

"There won't be a problem then!"

"We'll definitely regain the A-list spot tonight!"

"Right!"

"That's right!"

"Let's go! Everyone, let's put in our best efforts!"

Li Yu was a celebrity active in the Greater China region. He was a well-known actor and a Cantonese singer. He had debuted for over a decade already and had even received a prestigious domestic film award for best supporting actor. Of course, Li Yu was still best known for his singing. His popularity in Hong Kong was practically unmatched and he'd released over a dozen albums. Almost half of the songs he had released were well-known tunes that everyone could hum along to. He also had the title of "Little Singing God." The once big shot A-lister had ruled the A-list Celebrity Rankings for many years, even though he had not been able to break through any further in both the acting and singing fields. Thus, he just kept circling around at the bottom of the rankings, but had never dropped off from the A-list rankings before!

But today, Li Yu had been replaced in his A-list spot by Zhang Ye. His team was suddenly coveting the return of the position!

This was a battle!

A battle of life and death!

It was a battle for honor!

...

2 o'clock in the afternoon.

The long promoted micro movie "The Shooting" was unexpectedly released in advance. It even premiered first on the Internet through an online video hosting site and was free to watch!

This was a sequel to one of Li Yu's previous movies!

It was also Li Yu and his company's way of testing the waters of the micro movie art form!

It was suddenly getting lively on the Internet!

"Heavens!"

"They're premiering the micro movie so soon?"

"That's great! I'll go and have a watch!"

"I like Li Yu!"

"A veteran A-list celebrity's strength is definitely not something that a person like Zhang Ye who only knows how to scold people every day can match!"

"They're contending with each other already?"

"Li Yu and Zhang Ye have sounded the gong for their popularity

battle!"

"'The Shot' was a classic! So the sequel is definitely a must-watch!"

"Zhang Ye's in danger now!"

"Yeah, Teacher Li's team has made their move!"

Many of the Greater China citizens were practically in full support of Li Yu.

"Who is Zhang Ye?"

"I don't know, I've never heard of him before!"

"I only recognize Teacher Li Yu as an A-list celebrity!"

"Tonight, the outcome will be decided!"

"Teacher Li, go for it!"

The entire entertainment industry was watching!

From a subjective perspective, there was no such thing as a higher or lower art form. Some people might like this celebrity, while the others might prefer that celebrity; this was very normal

behavior. But objectively, Zhang Ye and Li Yu were actually two very different types of celebrities. Alright, actually Zhang Ye's style was basically just different from everyone else and he had always been a unique one. Zhang Ye's current popularity score on the popularity rankings was just a little higher than Li Yu's, almost to the point of being negligible. The two's overall popularities were nearly identical, with Li Yu being much more popular in the Greater China region, while Zhang Ye was ahead in mainland China. Therefore, if they started contending, it would be very difficult to say who the eventual winner would be.

The micro movie was released and only ran for 31 minutes.

But the moment it was released, the reviews online were extremely good!

"It's really quite good!"

"Ahhh, it was great!"

"Li Yu is so handsome! My idol!"

"It's indeed a classic! It continued the high quality of 'The Shot'!"

"It's such a good watch!"

"Recommending it! Recommending it with everything I've got!"

"The ending really deserves praise! What a turnaround!"

"Hahahaha, Teacher Li is going to return to the A-list!"

"Yeah, I have a feeling that might be so!"

The views on the micro movie climbed at a very fast rate and it was trending highly as well!

Last but not least, a lot of Li Yu's good friends who were also big shot celebrities in Greater China came to support him too. They all rallied behind him and helped promote his new film, "The Shooting"!

With that, there were even more people who went to watch it!

"Wow, so many celebrities have appeared for Teacher Li?"

"Teacher Li has a really good network!"

"Much better than Zhang Ye's!"

"Pfft, thanks, Captain Obvious. You can randomly pick any celebrity in the entertainment industry and I'm sure their network will be better than Zhang Ye's!"

"Zhang Ye's position is now up in the air!"

"Yeah, the A-list will be changing again!"

...

At a restaurant in the vicinity of Central TV.

In the restaurant's private suite.

Little Wang was getting anxious. "What are we gonna do! What are we gonna do!"

Huang Dandan was also anxious about the situation. "Why was Li Yu's micro movie released ahead of time?"

"They must have done it to compete with Director Zhang!" Wu Yi said.

Central TV Documentary Channel's Director Yan Tianfei suggested, "Little Zhang, why don't you go back first? We're almost done eating anyway, so maybe you should get back to work?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "No need, let's continue eating."

Yan Tianfei's secretary said anxiously, "You're acting way too calm."

Zhang Ye threw up his hands and said, "Didn't Central TV Live News interview me just now?"

The secretary said in a speechless manner, "That was just a ten-minute live interview. Besides, you only recited a poem. How do you expect that to be able to compare to a movie by an A-list celebrity from Greater China?"

...

Li Yu's studio.

The team members were nervous and busy with their work. There was even someone who was tracking Zhang Ye's Weibo and followed any news regarding him so that they would be able to take countermeasures if he took action.

Then, an hour passed. Followed by two more hours.

But Zhang Ye didn't move a muscle, doing absolutely nothing!

"What's going on?"

"Zhang Ye did not post anything?"

"No!"

"He did not do any promotions?"

"No!"

"How can his team's public relations be so bad?"

"Sis Xu, I heard that Zhang Ye does not have a team!"

"Ah?"

"He doesn't even have a manager!"

"Ah? Why didn't his management agency assign one to him?"

"He, he doesn't have an agency either!"

"What?"

"That's how it is."

"—Are you serious?"

"Yeah, everyone in mainland China's entertainment industry knows about this!"

"No agency? And not even a team or a manager? Then how did he

get all the way into the A-list? Did he fly up there? Never mind him, we're almost definitely going to get our spot back! He just appeared on Central TV Live News for an interview and recited a... cryptic poem? Then he better forget about contending with us anymore!"

"That's right!"

A lot of the people here did not really understand modern poetry, so they used the word "cryptic" to describe the poem.

...

Goof Group.

The messages kept popping up in the chat group.

Chen Guang said excitedly: "The battle has begun!"

Huo Dongfang: "@LiYu @ZhangYe Are you two online?"

There was no response from Zhang Ye. He wasn't online.

But the seldom online Li Yu actually appeared this time. He was also one of the participants of this group. "Old Huo, looking for me?"

Huo Dongfang: "[Yu-zai](#), long time no see."

Li Yu: "I've been very busy lately, so I haven't released any new works in a while. And since I dropped off the A-list, I had to quickly get my micro movie released in advance."

Fan Wenli: "The micro movie is quite good. I've already watched it twice."

Li Yu: "Thanks, Wenli."

Ning Lan was also online. "Yu-zai, you're really unlucky to have met with Zhang Ye this time."

Li Yu said: "I know about Zhang Ye, he's very popular in mainland China."

Xiaodong appeared too. "Both of you, do your best."

Ning Lan asked: "Let's hold a poll. Who does everyone think will win today?"

Xiaodong: "I know both Teacher Zhang and Teacher Li, so I'll abstain."

Huo Dongfang: "I'll stick with Yu-zai. After all, he's brought out his micro movie as his ace in the hole!"

Fan Wenli added: "Yeah, especially when it's the sequel to the classic movie, 'The Shot.'"

Chen Guang said: "Director Zhang's on thin ice."

Ning Lan laughed: "Yu-zai, I believe in you too." Then she wondered: "But why is Zhang Ye not taking any action? He went completely quiet after the live interview? And only recited a poem on it?"

The people in the chat group were all chiming in with their opinions.

Most of the people still believed that Li Yu would be able to reverse the situation today.

But at this moment, Zhang Yuanqi actually made a rare appearance in the chat group. "Don't underestimate his poems. They have always been one of Zhang Ye's most powerful weapons!"

"Yo, Sister Zhang!"

"You think Zhang Ye can maintain his ranking?"

"Zhang Ye's poems might be powerful, but after all is said and done, they're not mainstream."

"Yeah, no matter what, a micro movie is still a movie. It's the

most mass-marketed and mainstream art form that the people would have no reason to reject."

...

At night.

With great anticipation, midnight arrived!

The latest Celebrity Rankings Index had been updated!

But when everyone from the entertainment circle and the citizens saw the rankings, the results caught a large portion of them by surprise. Some people even had their jaws drop as they stared at the rankings!

There were no changes to the list!

The two of them had an increase in their popularity scores!

But Zhang Ye was still on the A-list while Li Yu was still on the B-list. Furthermore, the previous popularity score difference in the tens of thousands had now been stretched by a bit more, to a difference of almost a hundred thousand points!

This outcome greatly shocked many people!

How could this be?

Why was it like this?

[1. [Micro movie](#) -]

[2. "Zai" is an affectionate term/honorific added behind the last name of a male person. One famous example is Wah-zai, also known as Andy Lau.]

Chapter 908: What Do I Know Of Determination? All I Rely Upon Is Stubborn Endurance!

Li Yu's studio.

Everyone was still working overtime despite it already being midnight. They'd all stayed behind because they wanted to witness Teacher Li Yu's reascendancy to the A-list. They felt that it was because their team and Teacher Li Yu had underestimated Zhang Ye all along that it led to them slipping up and him leapfrogging into the A-list rankings and taking Li Yu's position. They thought it was their mistake! So today, they became serious and paid close attention to their objective. They did all they could, even messing up their future work arrangements. They brought out their ace in the hole, releasing "The Shooting" ahead of its original schedule. They thought they had everything covered!

Yet reality had given them a great big slap!

The rankings did not change!

In fact, the popularity scores had even widened by a bit more!

The studio manager said in shock, "Why?"

Li Yu's manager was so angry that his hands were trembling. "This is impossible!"

"Teacher Li, he..."

"Why was he still unable to catch up?"

"This...this..."

"Could there have been a mistake in the calculation?"

Everyone in the studio was unable to accept this outcome!

Including Li Yu himself, who sat there in shock for a very long while.

...

Online.

The netizens were also very surprised!

"Zhang Ye won?"

"Damn, he won just like that?"

"Just how on earth did Teacher Zhang do it?"

"Li Yu even released the micro movie he starred in! But as for Zhang Ye? What did Zhang Ye do? He only recited a poem on Central TV Live News?"

"This result is too surprising!"

"Fuck, I never expected this either!"

"Teacher Zhang's popularity has already reached such a state?"

"He could actually use a poem to beat a movie?"

"This is too goddamn barbaric!"

...

The people from the literary world were also shocked by this fact!

Just a poem, and it was just a simple modern poem, but it could actually fucking stand up to the popularity of a movie? Even if it was a micro movie, it was still a movie! It was still the sequel to a classic movie that had earned over a hundred million RMB at the box office! That achievement in itself would have contributed a lot to the popularity scores! But it still wasn't enough to finish off Zhang Ye? It couldn't even finish off a poem of Zhang Ye's?

Damn!

Since when did modern poetry have such a strong influence on people?

Why were the poems composed by the people from the Writer's Association not as powerful then?!

A lot of the literary world members were very perplexed by this, especially the poets. They almost vomited blood, thinking that comparison always ended up torturing people indeed!

Zhang Ye wrote poems.

They also wrote poems.

But why was the attitude toward it and its influence on people on a totally different level!?

...

The people from the entertainment industry were trembling in fear!

"Why?"

"Why didn't Yu-zai move up in the rankings?"

"That doesn't make any sense!"

"That micro movie was really good too!"

"Yeah, it was wonderful! So why didn't..."

...

Only Zhang Ye's friends and family were heaving sighs of relief.

At home, Ha Qiqi didn't whether to laugh or cry. "I got scared and worried for Director Zhang for nothing!"

When Zhang Zuo, who had gone to a bar with an old classmate, saw the results, he roared with laughter thrice. In his state of happiness, he toasted himself and chugged his drink before wiping his mouth and saying, "So it was because Director Zhang already knew how it would end!"

Several of his classmates started conversing.

"I really envy you."

"Out of our group of classmates, you're the only one who is doing rather well now."

"Zhang Ye is really great!"

"Yeah, I love him!"

Having had a few drinks, Zhang Zuo was also more talkative. "It's all because of Director Zhang that I'm doing as well as I am now. If it weren't for him bringing together our team, I wonder which TV station I'd have ended up at as someone's assistant. How could I have possibly become an assistant director of the number one team in the industry? You guys don't know this, but Director Zhang is truly capable and also a very loyal person to his friends! In my thirty-some years of life, I admire only him, really!"

"Now that Zhang Ye is an A-lister, it would only get better for you guys in the future!"

"Yeah, Zhang Ye can consider himself solidified on the A-list now!"

Zhang Zuo downed another glass before excitedly proclaiming in a slurred voice, "A-list, ma ass! We're gonna head for the S-list from here! Towards da international S-list! We'll destroy whoever stands in our way. Fuck, we dun care who it is!"

...

In the Goof Group.

The results had been published.

Ning Lan: "What do you guys think of this?"

Xiaodong sent a wry smile emoji. "What do I think of this? Well, I think Teacher Zhang Ye is completely out of the ordinary! I'm not young anymore and debuted many years ago, but this is the first time I've witnessed someone use the influence of a poem to combat the popularity of a movie! And...it even won!?"

Huo Dongfang: "I'm afraid that Yu-zai might not have a chance to regain his place in the A-list rankings in the short term. Zhang Ye has firmly established himself there. I guess Sister Zhang does have a good eye for detail."

A B-list actor suddenly appeared. "He only recited a poem? That's really amazing! Hai, when will I get the chance to achieve what he did with such flamboyance?! But I've really got to admit that sometimes, I'm really quite envious of Teacher Zhang Ye!"

At this time, yet another big shot A-list celebrity who was rarely seen online appeared and simply said: "A-list celebrities, do take care. The wolf is here!"

The wolf is here?

Yes, a wolf had really entered the mix of the A-list celebrities now!

And from a certain perspective, those words represented many of these heavyweight celebrities' acknowledgment of Zhang Ye as an

A-list celebrity for the first time ever!

...

The next day.

The news was published.

"Zhang Ye establishes his place in the A-list rankings!"

"Li Yu regrettably defeated!"

"I'm Unfamiliar with this World: Possibly one of most representative works of Zhang Ye!"

"Using a poem to subvert the entire entertainment industry's understanding of what is mainstream and what is not!"

"A niche work that can turn the world upside down—Zhang Ye has done it!"

"The brewing of a literary miracle!"

"From today onward, no one would dare claim, 'There is no place for literature at the top of the entertainment industry'!"

In the morning, Zhang Ye began inviting guests over.

At noon, he invited his relatives over for lunch. At night, he brought his old colleagues from Beijing Television and the new friends he made from Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala out for dinner. Later in the night, he bought rounds for Zhang Xia, Chen Guang, Fan Wenli, and a bunch of other friends.

It was the same the next day.

And the day after next.

Zhang Ye had treated all of his close friends and relatives to meals and drinks. To him, he felt that the reason he could stand here today was because of all their help and support. Now that he had finally established his place in the A-list, he definitely had to hold a feast to give them his thorough thanks, as well as celebrate his own achievements.

He drank continuously for a few days in a row.

He treated all those who deserved it and thanked those who he was supposed to thank.

On this day, Zhang Ye began to slow down and relax. He checked his Weibo and saw many comments left for him by his fans on his blog or within Weibo directly.

"Teacher Zhang, my sincerest congratulations to you!"

"We will walk with you all the way!"

"Teacher Zhang Ye, your determination has given me strength!"

"Yeah, you're the celebrity I admire most of all. From you, I have learned so many things. I want to continue learning from you and stay determined on my chosen career path by enduring all the way until the end!"

When Zhang Ye saw that, he thought for a moment before he started to type out a long passage of thankful words. "To my fans, and also to those who have ever helped me out before: Thank you, everyone. Those are the words I've wanted to say for a long time now, and it seems that I've said it many times before too. But as all of you know, which I believe that you all do, every time I say those words that have been repeated so many times, it has always come from the bottom of my heart. I am not great, nor am I excellent. I seek fame and wealth, I'm picky about what I eat, and also love to laze around. I do not have the great character and sentiments of my forebears; I'm not even worthy of being compared to them. All I am is just an ordinary citizen, an ordinary person like one you might pick out from the crowds on the street. Yes, that's right. That person you pick out might just be me. We're neither related by blood nor bond, and you won't find fame or wealth through me, but all of you have always supported me, fought alongside me, and scolded other people with me. You guys are the greatest. Really."

After typing that, Zhang Ye posted his message.

When a lot of the people saw this, they suddenly felt a tide of emotions surging within them!

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Teacher Zhang Ye!"

"Please don't say that!"

"We're not great!"

"Yeah, we just like you, that's all! We just like battling alongside you and scolding other people!"

A fledgling musician said: "Teacher Zhang, I wanted to give up several times during this journey of mine. But because of your greatness, your spirit, they made me gain the determination to stay on the path!"

Zhang Ye's fans were appearing all over the place!

Some of them were even tearing up!

Zhang Ye continued to type: "I have nothing that I can repay your kindness with, so all I can do is give everything that I've got, to cheer everyone up and make all of you happy to your satisfaction. Perhaps this might not be much, but it's the only thing I can do for all of you. You guys might not know this, but I'm not as determined as you guys think I am. I'm not the one who's encouraging you, I'm not the one giving strength to you. In fact, all

of you are the ones who are encouraging me and giving me strength. Otherwise, I couldn't have traveled this far and stood here today."

He thought about the times when his leaders suppressed him.

He thought of the times when his peers scolded him.

He thought of the times when he was attacked by the netizens.

Then, he asked himself, "Determination?"

Zhang Ye forced a smile and typed out: "What do I know of determination? All I rely upon is stubborn endurance!"

When that was posted onto Weibo, silence ensued!

At this moment, Zhang Ye's fans went quiet!

The netizens who saw this Weibo post also stayed silent!

Chen Guang sighed.

Zhang Xia felt her heart get wrenched.

Ha Qiqi, Little Wang, and the others could also feel their heartstrings being pulled.

Zhang Ye's friends all experienced a heavy heart from these words that Zhang Ye had written.

In the past, when Zhang Ye was in front of his fans, friends, family, and the media, when had he not put up a brave front? He always acted like he wasn't going to be pushed around and was always full of energy! But today, Zhang Ye had shown the most helpless side of himself to them!

He had shocked many people!

But at the same time, moved many of them!

Suddenly, the fans started to voice themselves!

"Teacher Zhang, we will stubbornly endure together with you!"

"Right! We will always be by your side!"

"Let's stubbornly endure till the end!"

"We will fight it out with them all the way!"

Thousands of people!

Tens of thousands of people!

Hundreds of thousands of people!

Zhang Ye's fans were appearing from everywhere like crazy!

Some of the female fans even cried as they typed their responses!

"Stubbornly endure till the end!"

"Stubbornly endure till the end!"

"Stubbornly endure till the end!"

When he saw this, Zhang Ye was very touched. At that instant, he could feel his blood pumping and stirring within him. Unable to stop himself, he impulsively typed out on the keypad: "Don't worry. Even if the sky falls someday, I'll definitely be the last one to fall! Alright, for my journey from here on out, let us stubbornly endure together...till the end!"

Chapter 909: The Pollution Problem!

On the eighth day of the Spring Festival.

It was back to work again.

Perhaps due to the setting off of firecrackers during the festive period, the air quality was not too good. Zhang Ye put on a face mask that was specially used for filtering out fine particles and went off to work very early in the morning.

At Central TV.

The Spring Festival was actually not over yet. The Central TV staff who came to work were still in a festive mood, with some of them discussing how much New Year's money they had given out, some arranging to go out at night and have some drinks, and some others dragging their luggage to work. From the looks of that, they must've just gotten off the train that ran during the Spring Festival and transported passengers to Beijing.

Suddenly, someone looked over.

"Teacher Zhang?"

"Morning, Teacher Zhang."

"Congratulations, Teacher Zhang!"

"Congratulations!"

"Teacher Zhang, happy belated New Year. Hope you've had a good one so far."

"Congratulations on ascending to the A-list!"

A small group of people walked past Zhang Ye and greeted him.

Central TV News Channel's Zhang Ya was also walking over at this time. When she saw Zhang Ye, she smiled and waved at him.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Have a good New Year, too, thanks."

Actually, after Zhang Ye had sued Central TV and caused chaos at the annual staff party, whenever most people bumped into him at work, they would usually try to avoid him as much as possible. They didn't risk greeting or talking to him for fear of getting into trouble. But today, a lot of them were a lot more friendlier. This was due to Zhang Ye's status being different from before!

An A-list celebrity!

Of all the Central TV staff, how many were at least an A-list celebrity?

None!

Not a single one!

Zhang Ye was the one and only!

If this were during the time when Zhang Ye had just arrived at Central TV, he would just be considered one of the more popular hosts of Central TV and maybe one of the several pillars of Central TV. But now, being known as one of some was no longer relevant. Right now, he was the most popular host in Central TV and the pillar of the station! Although, it was unlikely that this pillar would be supporting Central TV much longer. Everyone within Central TV knew that Zhang Ye's contract with Central TV was going to end soon and that Central TV would definitely not be renewing his contract, nor would Zhang Ye be renewing it with them!

Upstairs.

Central TV Department 14.

The Documentary Channel.

Half the staff had already arrived at the office.

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Morning!"

"Teacher Zhang, Director Yan is looking for you. He asked for you to see him in his office after you arrived."

"OK." Zhang Ye waved in acknowledgment and put down his bag. Then he knocked on Yan Tianfei's door and entered, finding him sipping tea at the moment. "Director Yan, you were looking for me?"

Yan Tianfei sighed with pleasure. "This Da Hong Pao you gave me is delicious!"

Zhang Ye sat down and said generously, "Haha, I will bring more for you next time."

"Forget it, I can't afford to drink this tea." Yan Tianfei waved it off and put down his teacup. He then said with a smile, "After the new year fully passes, you'll almost be a free man."

Zhang Ye sighed and said, "Yeah, it's been quite quick."

Yan Tianfei laughed and said, "Yeah, pretty quick. It's almost been a year, eh? So, what are your future plans? What are you thinking of doing next? Will you still be working at a TV station?"

Zhang Ye shrugged. "I haven't actually thought about it."

Yan Tianfei asked, "You're an A-lister now, so aren't lots of

people waiting at your door to try to recruit you? Don't you have any preferences for yourself?"

Zhang Ye shook his head and smiled. "I really don't have any. Anyway, it's still going to be awhile before my contract finally runs out, so I would like to use this period of time to rest up. After joining Central TV and up till now, I have not had any time for myself. Since there's no rush, I'll just rest and think about it along the way. When the time comes and my contract runs out, I'll decide it then."

Produce a show?

Host?

Sing?

Act?

Write novels?

He had too many options to choose from, making it difficult for him to decide what to do next.

Yan Tianfei nodded and said, "It's important to contemplate how you want to continue your journey. The competition is intense within the A-list. You could even describe it as brutal, so protecting your position there is considered a huge achievement. Moreover, you're thinking of going even further than this, which

makes it even harder for you. I think that it's right for you to put some serious consideration into this."

After chatting for a while.

The secretary came in and said, "Director Yan, everyone has arrived."

Yan Tianfei looked at his watch and said, "Alright, tell everyone to gather in the meeting room."

In the meeting room.

Everyone from Department 14 was here.

The first thing Yan Tianfei announced was, "During the new year celebrations, Director Zhang treated us, but many of you had gone back to your hometown at that time. Therefore, I would like to make use of this opportunity and have everyone give their congratulations to Director Zhang for getting promoted into the A-list!"

Applause thundered!

Everyone was excitedly clapping their hands!

"Director Zhang, congratulations!"

"Congratulations, Director Zhang!"

"You're amazing!"

"Yeah, when I found out about the news in my hometown, I was totally dumbfounded!"

"You've brought a lot of pride to our Documentary Channel again!"

Those colleagues who did not spend the new year in Beijing were all giving him their congratulations.

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Director Yan, it was just a small thing. Why are you bringing it up at the meeting?"

Yan Tianfei laughed. "How many Central TV hosts have ever become A-listers? There's practically no one. Besides, you even achieved it while you were a part of Department 14, so how can that be a small thing?"

The meeting continued.

He gave a summary of last year's performance and very quickly summed up everything. Yan Tianfei was not one to drag things out. Soon, they were touching on the job assignments for the upcoming year. "With the new year, the pressure on our department to perform will be enormous. As everyone knows, Director Zhang will be leaving us soon." Saying that, Old Yan

smiled and said, "But the legacy that he has left for us is much too great. Using a documentary, he ruled over the nationwide viewership ratings for two straight months. That has now become a source of pressure for us as well as our motivation, spurring us forward."

Everyone gave a wry smile at Zhang Ye. Yes, this hat was certainly too big for their heads and the results were too brilliant. In the future, after Zhang Ye left, what would they do? How could they shoot another documentary like *A Bite of China*? Thinking about it gave them with a splitting headache. But from a different perspective, this was a good thing. Since when had an unloved and uncared for documentary channel like them been able to attract so much attention from the audience? Essentially, Zhang Ye had helped them lay a strong foundation before he left so that their path ahead would be much smoother!

Yan Tianfei took out some documents and handed them to his secretary to pass out. "During the festive season, people set off firecrackers. It created a ton of smog everywhere. I've been coughing for several days and feeling bad because of that, but when I read some of the newspapers, they don't seem to be placing any emphasis on new terms like [PM readings](#) and such. As a result, a lot of citizens are not conscious of the need to protect themselves against this. I've noticed that the only ones who wore a mask to work were Teacher Zhang and Little Huang, right?"

Huang Dandan coughed and said, "I've been having some breathing problems lately."

Next to her, her boyfriend, Tong Fu, gave her a cup of warm

water. "Drink up."

Zhang Ye asked, "Is it serious?"

"Cough, cough..." Huang Dandan coughed several times again. "It's alright, it's just a slight cough. Maybe a cold."

Zhang Ye said, "The skies are getting smoggy, so everyone should wear a face mask."

Yan Tianfei said, "Director Zhang is right, we should all take precautions. I have a few friends who are experts in the related fields and they told me that this is a very serious problem that will cause great harm. Moreover, it's a slow-acting chronic harm, so why are the media and government not placing any importance on this problem? Whenever the issue of pollution is brought up, it only receives superficial mentions from them? There's too many concerns involved in this problem, like economic and societal factors that make it very complicated. Therefore, after some thinking, why shouldn't our Documentary Channel be the first to bring about the changes to this issue? We should create a documentary based on the pollution problem and bring the citizens' attention to it. We have to make the enterprises contributing to the issue panic and pressure the environmental departments to govern this with more regulations so that we can get rid of the pollution problem! What do you guys think about that?"

"That's good!"

"It'll work!"

"Whatever you say! We'll do it your way!"

"Right, please assign the tasks to us!"

Yan Tianfei said, "Alright, our Documentary Channel's first project this year has been decided. We'll set up a program team and collect data, conduct interviews, and film onsite. As for the documentary's executive director...hmm, let me think about who will be the most suitable for the role."

Zhang Ye was amused. "Director Yan, are you already excluding me?"

Yan Tianfei looked at him and said, "I of course know that you're the most suitable for the role, but your contract will be up soon and I can't possibly hold you back from leaving, can I?"

Zhang Ye bluntly said, "Each day that I'm still at the Documentary Channel, I will keep working. I will leave only after I leave. Besides, I would also like to make this documentary investigating the pollution problem. I already have an idea in mind for it. I'm not going to ask for the role of the executive director, because I think either Old Ha or Zhang Zuo are more suitable for it. So just let me be in charge of the planning for the documentary."

Yan Tianfei considered this for a moment before saying, "Alright! That's fine!"

...

The meeting ended.

Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo came looking for him.

Zhang Zuo said helplessly, "Director Zhang, if you're not leading the team, how can we film this?"

"Yeah." Ha Qiqi added meekly, "The two of us have always worked under you. We can't handle the role of executive director."

Zhang Ye replied, "When it comes to work experience, the two of you are better than me, so why can't you do it? I'll be leaving soon, and I don't even know if that will be before or after this documentary is completed, so of course it has to be one of you who takes the role, haha. Besides, I was thinking of taking some days off to rest at home for a while and relax, so the interview and filming here can only be overseen by you two. Don't worry, I'll draft an outline of the interviews and shoot to let you two have a guideline on what to do. Just follow it and you'll be fine. If you really encounter something that you can't handle, or you can't find a suitable candidate for the interviews, just wait for me to come back after my break and I'll help out with that!"

Only then did Zhang Zuo finally smile. "Sure. With you saying that, I can feel relieved."

Zhang Ye said, "Don't worry, I won't refuse to work. The outline will definitely be drafted by the end of the day."

The two of them left.

Zhang Ye's assistant, Little Wang, brought in a cup of hot tea for him then went back out.

Zhang Ye, now alone in the office, picked up a pen and closed his eyes to think for a long time. Finally, he started scribbling on the piece of paper!

A documentary on the pollution problem?

The first thing he thought of was that documentary film by Chai Jing that caused a great deal of controversy across the nation, the famous [Under the Dome](#): Chai Jing's Documentary on Air Pollution in China! It was also the first documentary in his previous world that brought such large-scale concern of the fearful problem of pollution to the attention of the citizens. It was the highly influential and controversial missing piece to the understanding of this subject.

Naturally, Zhang Ye had to use it as his reference for the new documentary.

He spent the entire day cooped up in his office to finish drafting the outline of the documentary!

[1. PM readings: Particulate matter readings.]

[2. [Under the Dome](#)]

Chapter 910: The Landlady Auntie's whereabouts!

The next day.

He happily slept in until it he woke up naturally. Since the outline of the documentary on air pollution was already given to the staff, Zhang Ye did not bother with the rest of the production or how they were going to shoot it. He had already applied for some time off and was preparing to sleep well. He did not wish to do anything at all in the coming few days.

His mother was making breakfast.

His father was watching the morning news.

His mother asked, "Up already?"

Zhang Ye returned, "What are we having?"

His mother replied, "Buns. I steamed them myself."

Zhang Ye said, "OK, I'm gonna go out for a run first and eat when I come back."

His mother remarked, "Heh, you're quite hardworking, aren't you?"

Zhang Ye said, "It's just some exercises to build up my stamina and recharge myself."

His father inquired, "Didn't you take the week off? You might as well take a vacation and enjoy yourself."

Zhang Ye said, "That sounds good too. I'll think about it."

Outside.

Zhang Ye ran a long lap around Caishikou and found it not satisfying enough, so he ran another two laps and ended up at Guozixiang where he got recognized by someone at the bus stop. There were two girls shouting and yelling like they had gone crazy!

"Look, it's Zhang Ye!"

"Quick, come and take a look, it's Zhang Ye!"

"Heavens! It's really him!"

Zhang Ye quickly adjusted his sunglasses before running back the other way.

The two girls chased him with all their might as the crowd grew larger and larger. In the end, it turned into a pack with at least a dozen people "jogging" together behind Zhang Ye.

After becoming an A-list celebrity, Zhang Ye could clearly feel that the treatment he was receiving was totally different from when he was just a B-list celebrity. When he left work yesterday and was behind the wheel stopped at a traffic light, he nearly got surrounded by the people who recognized him.

After reaching home.

Zhang Ye was panting heavily. "Aiyo, I'm so exhausted!"

His father looked at him and asked, "What's the matter? Why did you run so hard?"

"Some people were chasing after me!" Zhang Ye quickly took a towel to wipe away his sweat and said, "Fortunately, this bro has been training and running from time to time over the past two years, or I would have really been surrounded by them!" Ever since he had learned Taiji Fist...alright, after eating the Taiji Fist Skill Books, he had gained a greater enthusiasm for training his body. At times, his training would be delayed when he got too busy with work. But once he had some free time, he would go for a run to keep himself active.

"Chenchen, get up and eat breakfast!" Zhang Ye went to her room to wake her up.

However, he found Chenchen still sleeping very soundly.

Suddenly, Zhang Ye's cell phone rang in the living room. He went out to check who it was from and saw that it was actually Rao Aimin calling him. He immediately answered and said angrily: "Old Rao, why was your cell phone switched off for the past few days?" He was very unhappy with Rao Aimin since he did not even address her as Big Sis Rao anymore, but instead directly addressed her as Old Rao!

At the other end, the landlady auntie's lazy voice spoke: "Where's Chencheng?"

Zhang Ye snapped: "She is still sleeping. I tried to wake her but she won't get up."

Rao Aimin said: "Uh, it's been hard on you, kid."

Zhang Ye chuckled: "You telling me that, are you? Did the sun rise from the west today?"

"And thank your parents on my behalf too," Rao Aimin added calmly.

Zhang Ye said: "Alright, don't talk about those useless things. When are you coming back? Before you left, you said that you would be back within the month, or at most be gone for an entire month. Just look at which day it is already! Which year it is already! Every month I called, you always said that you would be back soon, so where did you go to? It's already been more than six months!"

Rao Aimin answered: "It will be soon for real this time. I'll be back in Beijing in another two days."

Zhang Ye paused for a moment, then asked in bewilderment: "Did something happen to you?"

Rao Aimin said: "Just a minor matter."

"But why do I feel that something is not right?" Zhang Ye had already gotten used to Rao Aimin's venomous mouth which she would always use to deride him and not say anything nice the other times she had called. But what was wrong with her today? She acknowledged how it's been hard on me and even thanked me?

However, Rao Aimin sounded quite spirited. "I'm very good. In fact, I've never been better. Alright, I'm not going to chitchat with you any longer! I'll be back in at most another two days." However, Rao Aimin's next lines made Zhang Ye shudder with fear. "If I don't make it back, take good care of Chenchen. My houses at Jiaomen will all go to you. That's all, I'm hanging up now!"

"Eh, what do you mean by that? Hello? Don't hang up!"

The connection was severed!

Zhang Ye hurriedly called back but her cell phone was already switched off!

Dammit!

Don't make it back?

Take good care of Chenchen?

The houses will all go to me?

What's the meaning of all that!

Sensing something amiss, his mother quickly asked, "Was that Chenchen's aunt? What's wrong?"

Zhang Ye quickly whispered, "I don't know. She said she would be back in two days, but at the end of the call, she added that if she didn't make it back, her houses at Jiaomen would all go to me and requested that I take good care of Chenchen!"

His father was startled. "What happened?"

"Why...why would she not make it back?" His mother was also badly shocked and said, "Was she just kidding?"

His father immediately said, "Is she suffering from some illness? Did she go away to treat her illness for the past six months? Is she getting surgery?"

Zhang Ye immediately said, "Nonsense, I've never even seen her catch a cold. Even if I die twice from illness, she would still be

alive!"

"Pui!" His mother said angrily, "Why are you saying such inauspicious things during the new year?! Why are you talking about dying!"

His father also said with worry, "Something serious must have happened to Chenchen's aunt!"

"It is definitely something big!" Zhang Ye said, "For a miser like Big Sis Rao who would even pick up a cent from the ground and wipe it clean before pocketing it, she is actually saying that she would leave me those dozens of small-sized apartments over at Jiaomen for free? Fuck! Something really serious must have certainly happened!"

His mother: "..."

His father: "..."

Zhang Ye quickly searched through his cell phone's contacts, saying, "That won't do, I have to ask around!"

If Rao Aimin had switched off her phone, then he would have to call up Old Rao's junior brother, Lu Yuhu who was working at the Ministry of Public Security.

However, when he called, that phone was also switched off.

What was happening?

What sort of situation was this?

He made another call to Director Dong of the Internet Surveillance Bureau, who was also the head of Big Saber Bro's—Fan Yingyun's—department. Back then, when Zhang Ye was sent to the police station after beating up Lee Anson at the Spring Festival Gala, it was Rao Aimin who got Lu Yuhu to contact the Internet Surveillance Bureau's Old Dong to let Zhang Ye seek refuge there.

Du, du. The call connected.

"Haha, Teacher Zhang, congratulations! You're an A-list celebrity!" Old Dong said.

Zhang Ye did not have time to thank him and immediately said: "Director Dong, can you contact Lu Yuhu?"

Old Dong was dumbfounded. "Why? Can't you get through to him?"

Zhang Ye said: "His cell phone is switched off!"

Old Dong sounded surprised and replied: "Alrighty then, I'll help you ask around."

Zhang Ye said: "Please help me ask around. I'm looking for him regarding some urgent matters!"

However, he received a call back a few minutes later.

Director Dong said: "Sorry, I was also unable to get through to him. Who knows where he might have gone for a mission again. Their Ministry of Public Security is constantly very busy with something!"

After hanging up, Zhang Ye couldn't help but let out a curse as he felt very anxious. Although the landlady auntie was very sharp-tongued, when he had just graduated from university and was without a job or money for food, it was Rao Aimin who helped him out. Now that she had suddenly left behind what was seemingly her last words, Zhang Ye's heart was thumping furiously in anxiety!

I don't really have any guts, so please don't scare me like that!

Where on earth did you go?

Finally, Zhang Ye went back into his room and closed the door behind him. Then he powered on his computer and hacked into the airport, the train ticketing system, the car rental stop, the cell phone service provider, and some other websites, hoping to check up on Rao Aimin's whereabouts. In his impulsiveness, Zhang Ye even hacked into the bank system to trace the balance of Rao Aimin, to see which city she had used her bank card at. Since

Zhang Ye was the most wanted hacker with the highest bounty in the world, this action was extremely risky for him. Even so, Zhang Ye still could not find any information. It was not that his hacking skills were bad, but because a lot of the websites and access points were not under the same network. If he were to really check them one by one, it would be too much work for him to avoid all the firewalls and web security at any given time. If he really had to run an in-depth trace, it would take at least three to five days to track her down. Judging from Rao Aimin's tone, her event was definitely going to happen within the next two days!

What should he do?

What should he do?

Zhang Ye had no ideas left as he pushed open the bedroom door and scolded, "Where on earth did that Rao Aimin disappear t—" Before he finished, he quickly shut his mouth. "Chenchen, you're awake already?"

Chenchen looked at him. "What happened to my aunt?"

His mother quickly signaled to her son.

Zhang Ye just laughed it off and said, "It's nothing, it's nothing. Your aunt called just now and asked whether you did your homework and how your learning is progressing. I told her everything was good."

Chenchen could sense something was off as she stared at him and asked, "Where's my aunt?"

Zhang Ye stuttered, "She...will be back in another two days."

"Let's have breakfast!" His mother changed the topic as she smiled and said, "Come, Chenchen, taste the big buns that Grandma made and steamed."

His father picked up his chopsticks and gave a bun to Chenchen with a smile. "Try it. It's delicious."

Chenchen didn't move and simply stared unblinkingly at Zhang Ye. "Zhang Ye, where's my aunt?"

"Didn't I already tell you?" Zhang Ye forced a smile and said, "She'll be back very soon."

"Have some buns, Chenchen." His mother smiled and said, "They're going to turn cold."

Chenchen's expression sank and she jumped right out of the chair. She went over and tugged on Zhang Ye's arm, ordering, "Zhang Ye! Bring me along to find my aunt!"

This child was way too clever!

Zhang Ye said, "Stop making a fuss."

Chenchen shouted, "Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye!"

Zhang Ye tried to scare her. "I'll get angry if you keep making a fuss!"

Chenchen was not even listening as she continued pulling Zhang Ye's clothes at the direction of the door while yelling, "Zhang Ye! Bring me to find my aunt!"

This was the first time that Zhang Ye had seen Chenchen get so anxious!

When his mother saw this, she could no longer pretend and felt her heart wrench as she teared up!

Zhang Ye was also feeling a sense of uneasiness. "I would like to know where she is too. Where am I going to find her?!"

Chenchen's cries were getting louder and louder. "Zhang Ye! Bring me there!"

"I don't know where we can find her." Zhang Ye's heart softened the more he heard her cries.

Chenchen shouted, "Zhang Ye! Bring me along to find my aunt! Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye!" The child's voice was turning hoarse from all that shouting!

Thinking of Rao Aimin.

Looking at Chenchen.

Zhang Ye's heart was wrenching!

"Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye!"

Suddenly, Zhang Ye clenched his teeth and slapped his thigh. "Fuck! Alright! I'll bring you along to find her! Even if she is hiding in the Sahara Desert, I'll goddamn locate her!"

Chenchen was finally quiet.

"It wasn't easy for me to get a few days off, do you think I have it easy?!" Zhang Ye turned around and said to his parents, "Dad, Mom, I'm gonna be out for a few days!"

His mother asked anxiously, "Where on earth are you going to find her?"

Zhang Ye said exasperated, "God knows where! I'll think of a way!"

Chapter 911: Searching for Rao Aimin!

Later that morning.

Zhang Ye packed his luggage while continuing to call.

The cell phones were switched off.

They were still switched off.

He could not get through to either Rao Aimin and Lu Yuhu!

If it were anyone else, Zhang Ye would not have been so worried. For example, people like Dong Shanshan and Zhang Yuanqi would basically not get into any big trouble. Even if they did meet with some problems, their lives were not likely going to be in any danger. Rather, it was easier for a highly skilled person like Rao Aimin to get into trouble because of her involvement with the Chinese martial arts world, which many talented people were a part of. Zhang Ye had seen Rao Aimin's martial arts before and they were really great. But as for how great her martial arts really were and what situation Rao Aimin—the Senior Sister of her generation in the Eight Trigrams School—was in, Zhang Ye basically had no clue whatsoever. He was not from that world after all.

Chenchen quickly finished breakfast.

His mother instructed repeatedly, "Be careful on the way and stay

safe!"

"I understand, Grandma." Chenchen nodded.

His father also said, "Listen to Little Ye on the way and don't misbehave."

Zhang Ye added, "Right, you can come together with me, but before we go, let's make it clear that you must listen to me on all things. Otherwise, I won't bring you along, alright?"

Chenchen was especially obedient today. "I got it."

After packing. "Alright, let's go!"

His mother walked them out and said, "Come back quickly!"

His father said, "Go search for Chenchen's aunt thoroughly and make sure to bring her back!"

"I understand. Don't you two worry." Zhang Ye started the car and drove out from the district.

On the road.

Chenchen looked at him and asked, "Zhang Ye, where are we going to look for her?"

Zhang Ye was also thinking about it. "Chenchen, before your aunt became your guardian, hadn't you always been taken care of by the relatives on your father's side? Would they know anything?"

Chenchen shook her head and said, "My aunt has never spoken to them."

Zhang Ye asked, "Then what about the others? Is there anyone else you know? What about Old Rao's junior brothers and sisters?"

Chenchen shook her head and said, "I don't know how to get in contact with them!"

"Where do they live?"

"I don't know."

"Does the Eight Trigrams Palm have a sect headquarters? Where is it located?"

"...I've forgotten."

Even if she was clever, she was still just a nine-year-old child. It was impossible for her to know everything.

Zhang Ye truly did not have any leads at all. He could not get in contact with any of those people he knew were related to Rao

Aimin and could not pin any hopes on Chenchen's cluelessness either. If there was one thing that they knew, then it was only: Old Rao was not in Beijing.

"Dammit, let's go to the airport!"

Suddenly, Zhang Ye thought of a way!

Although it was an extremely terrible and unreliable way!

...

At the capital's airport.

China Airlines' ticket sales counter.

Zhang Ye was so fully geared up with his sunglasses and face mask that the China Airlines female employee could not recognize him immediately. It was only when it was Zhang Ye's turn in line and he handed over his identification card that he got recognized!

The female employee of China Airlines said with a face full of shock, "T-T-Teacher Zhang?"

Zhang Ye nodded and said, "I need two airplane tickets."

That female employee said excitedly, "Sure, sure! Aiyo, I have

met an idol today! Teacher Zhang, congratulations on your promotion to the A-list. Also, I would really like to thank you for the time when the airplane got hijacked. One of the air stewardesses you rescued back then is my older cousin. I haven't had the opportunity to thank you until now!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "You're welcome."

The female employee was very talkative and could not stop speaking. "You may not know it, but after that incident, many of our air stewardesses would either carry your photo with them or hang your posters in the crew rest areas during a China Airlines' flight. My cousin says that your photo can ward off any evil!"

Zhang Ye: "..."

Eh, why does it sound like she's insulting me?

Chenchen urged him, "Zhang Ye, get the tickets!"

Zhang Ye remembered, "Right, right, right!"

Only then did that China Airlines' employee realize. "Alright, I'll process it for you. As you are our honored passenger, you are entitled a free lifetime pass on our China Airlines' flights. If you brought anyone with you, uh, don't worry, that will be free too. Do you want tickets for today?" Actually, the lifetime honored passenger only applied to one person, but if that person was Zhang Ye, it did not matter at all for them to give an additional one or two

more tickets. Even the CEO of China Airlines would not say anything to this.

Zhang Ye nodded. "Yes."

The female employee smiled and said, "Which flight would you like to be on?"

However, Zhang Ye's next sentence made that female employee's jaw drop!

Zhang Ye declared, "Any flight!"

The female employee was dumbfounded. "Ah?"

Zhang Ye repeated, "Just get me on any flight!"

Chenchen added, "Hurry up!"

The female employee could not quite react in time. "Then, then where would you like to go?"

Zhang Ye smartly said, "Anywhere!"

Chenchen echoed, "Anywhere!"

The female employee nearly fainted!

Anywhere?

Fuck, you can even be so random when it comes to traveling? Aren't you being too goddamn casual about it?!

"If you're not telling me where you're going, how...how am I going to print the boarding pass for you?" The female employee stared with her eyes wide.

But Zhang Ye said, "Whatever boarding pass you print for me, I'll travel to that place!"

Chenchen said, "Hurry up!"

At this moment, Zhang Ye opened up the game ring's virtual screen and activated the Lucky Halo (Upgraded). There rested an angelic halo over his head that no one else could see as it emitted a pulsating glow that rippled outward. One pulse, two pulses, three pulses. His reputation points were dropping as fast as water coming out of a running tap!

-100,000!

-100,000!

-100,000!

That's right!

Zhang Ye's way was this: trying his luck!

It sounded totally unreliable but this was the only way out now!

The female employee dabbed at her sweat, not knowing how to handle this situation. If it were another passenger who said such a thing to her, she would classify that person as a troublemaker. But the person right in front her was Zhang Ye, an illustrious A-list celebrity, an associate professor at both Peking University and Media College, a world-class mathematician, a great poet, a literary scholar, and even a hero who had previously rescued their China Airlines' flight. He was a lifetime honored passenger of China Airlines!

She hurriedly went to consult her manager.

The female manager, standing not too far away, quickly rushed over to them.

"Anywhere?" When the female manager heard that, she nearly fainted. "Teacher Zhang, please give us a destination that you would like to go to, or just tell us a location and we'll print the boarding pass for you!"

But Zhang Ye did not say anything in specific. "Just choose any destination for me."

The female manager and employee were nearly in tears. "Are you bringing the child on a trip somewhere? How about going to Sanya? The weather there is very suitable for a trip right now."

Zhang Ye said, "Sure!"

The female manager exclaimed, "Yangzhou is not bad too and the environment is very good."

Zhang Ye said, "That's fine too!"

The female manager asked again, "What about Guilin?"

Zhang Ye nodded and said, "Anywhere is fine!"

Dammit, Teacher Zhang, could you please stop making things difficult for us?

This manager and the female employee had worked here for around five years. What kind of passengers had they not encountered? What problems had they not faced? But this was actually the first time they came across a person buying airplane tickets in the way Teacher Zhang Ye did! They had never had such an experience before!

-100,000!

-100,000!

The Lucky Halo (Upgraded) was still in effect.

The female manager had no other choice. Seeing how Zhang Ye was so insistent and the little girl beside him was also urging desperately, she could only say, "You just want to go anywhere for a relaxing trip, right? Then we're really going to print a boarding pass randomly for you, OK?" With that, she patted that female employee beside her and said, "Just print two boarding passes for anywhere!"

That female staff was getting nervous!

Randomly?

How could she just print them randomly?!

Her hand was shaking so badly that she even misclicked on the random destination. "Aiyo, I've made a mistake and clicked on Xinjiang instead. That is not a very famous scenic area, le-le-let me change it to another place!"

Unexpectedly, Zhang Ye suddenly said loudly, "That's it! Don't change it!"

The female manager: "..."

The female employee said, "You...you haven't even asked where

in Xinjiang you're headed to!"

"There's no need to ask. It's there!" Zhang Ye heartily said.

The female manager: "..."

The female employee was silent for a moment before saying, "Alright then."

After getting the airline tickets, Zhang Ye deactivated the Lucky Halo.

After receiving the boarding passes, Zhang Ye brought the child to line up at the security checkpoint and expectedly took the green lane. China Airlines was still very good to him by giving two first class tickets!

During the security checks, they had to reveal their faces to match the photos. When Zhang Ye removed his sunglasses and face mask, the three security officers got quite excited!

"Zhang Ye!"

"Aiyo, Teacher Zhang!"

"Are you going somewhere for business?"

Actually, the security officers at the airport had seen more celebrities than they could count and would usually come across at least one or two celebrities each day. But even that did not get them as excited as they were now. That was because Zhang Ye was different from other celebrities, especially in the context of an airport where he was simply a legend. Back then, this fellow was just an amateur when he piloted a large commercial airliner to a safe landing, shocking every higher-up and airport employee who had concluded that the hijacked plane could not be saved. The security officers were also watching the situation closely that day and had a very deep impression of Zhang Ye because of this. The shocking scenes from that time were something they would never, ever forget in their lifetime. It was a very shocking memory make their blood boil!

While going through the security checks, a female security officer even whispered into Zhang Ye's ear, "Teacher Zhang, I'm a diehard fan of yours and really like you a lot!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you."

When the security officer next to her heard that, he laughed and said, "Are you the only diehard fan here? Of all the people working at the airport, which of us are not fans of Teacher Zhang!"

Zhang Ye engaged in a little bit of banter with them.

Chenchen was not happy at this and tugged at his arm. "Zhang Ye, hurry up."

"Alright, alright." Only then did Zhang Ye lead the child and walk off.

When they reached the departure gate.

Only now did Chenchen gaze at him with a doubtful face. "Zhang Ye, are you really sure of this? Can we really find my aunt by going to this place?"

"Didn't we already agree that you would listen to me when we are out?" Zhang Ye rolled his eyes.

Chenchen stared at him. "But I feel that you aren't very reliable!"

Zhang Ye smiled wryly. "In any case, I'll try my best."

Chenchen's face darkened. "You promised me that you would find and bring my aunt back!"

"Since I promised you, I'll definitely do it!" Zhang Ye reaffirmed his confidence. "My luck has always been good. Trust your Uncle Zhang!"

Trust him?

Actually, this fellow did not even trust himself!

Trying to depend on luck, just sheer, blind luck, would that really be OK?

Chapter 912: Damn, We Actually Found Her!

9:30 in the morning.

They boarded the plane.

On this small plane, there wasn't much distinction between the first class and economy class seating. Zhang Ye and Chenchen were seated in the fourth row, which was slightly further at the end of the first-class cabin.

"Fasten your seatbelt," Zhang Ye said.

"OK," Chenchen replied.

"Sit properly and don't run around later," Zhang Ye reminded.

"I know," Chenchen said impatiently.

When most of the passengers had boarded the plane, the cabin door was closed.

As Zhang Ye was wearing sunglasses and a face mask, the people in first class did not recognize him. They all had their heads lowered and were busy with their own affairs, some reading the newspaper while others were preparing to turn off their cell phones.

A while later, the plane took off.

When the plane reached cruising altitude, an air stewardess walked out with two cups of hot tea and headed straight to where Zhang Ye was seated. She squatted down and smiled sweetly, saying, "Teacher Zhang, please have some tea." Although the other passengers could not recognize Zhang Ye, how would she not know who he was? All the flight attendants had a passenger list with them.

Zhang Ye was surprised as he took the tea from her. "Oh, thank you."

The air stewardess smiled at Chenchen. "Little kid, have some tea too."

Chenchen glanced at her and said, "I want to drink soda."

Zhang Ye slapped her upside the head and said, "Why don't you just drink whatever you're given?"

"I want to drink soda." Chenchen frowned.

The air stewardess immediately said, "Sure, no problem, Auntie will get it for you." Very quickly, the air stewardess served the soda and even brought along a plush toy. "Is this nice? It's for you."

Chenchen had a glance and just said, "Orh."

Zhang Ye stared at her and said, "Say thank you."

Chenchen said unwillingly, "Thank you."

The air stewardess was smiling widely. "You're welcome."

At this moment, some of the surrounding first-class passengers looked over with a blank expression. Didn't the plane just take off? It shouldn't be time for the in-flight service yet. Why did she start serving drinks the moment she appeared? And even gave the little girl a toy? Eh, why aren't we getting such treatment as well?

However, what would make them faint even harder was only just starting.

The moment that air stewardess left, another air stewardess came.

This was a plumper air stewardess and the moment she came over, she headed straight to where Zhang Ye and Chenchen were seated. She squatted down with a smile and said, "Here, it's quite cold on the plane, Auntie got a blanket for you."

Zhang Ye immediately said, "Oh, thank you."

The plump air stewardess said, "You're welcome, this is my job." She even took the initiative to cover Chenchen with the blanket

and said, "This child is really beautiful, how old is she?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "She's almost nine years old."

A moment later, under the dumbfounded gazes of the surrounding passengers, a female purser in her thirties also came over.

The female purser smiled and asked, "Is the child used to riding on a plane?"

"It shouldn't be a problem." Zhang Ye smiled.

The female purser looked at Chenchen and asked, "Do you want something else to drink? Is the seat comfortable? Is it cold? You can tell me if you have any needs."

Chenchen suddenly spoke, "I want to take a look at the cockpit."

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes at her. "Why do you want to look at that?!"

Chenchen said, "I want to take a look."

This child was overly curious!

The female purser giggled. "You want to have a look at the

cockpit? Alright, I'll go and check with the captain first." She then walked away before returning a few minutes later. She clapped her hands together and said, "Alright, Auntie has spoken with the captain. I'll bring you over now, but once you are inside, you mustn't touch anything, OK?"

Chenchen blinked several times and got up from her seat.

Zhang Ye quickly said, "Sorry for troubling you."

The female purser smiled and said, "It's not troublesome, it's no trouble at all."

Looking at the purser leading the child into the cockpit from afar, the surrounding passengers were even more dumbfounded. Fuck, she's even getting a tour of the cockpit? What kind of treatment is this? We are also first-class passengers! Why haven't we heard of such privileges in first class?! They get handed drinks, receive a toy, and even get a tour of the cockpit?

At once, everyone looked at that man wearing the sunglasses.

Who was this person?

How can he be so privileged to get such treatment?!

Unbeknownst to them, that person beside them was the one who had saved a China Airlines plane with hundreds of passengers and cabin crew in it. Other than allowing the child to get a tour of the

cockpit, even if he were to ask to take over the first officer's role for a while, no one would say anything since this person had really piloted a plane before!

...

A few hours later, the plane landed.

Outside the airport.

Zhang Ye looked around the place as he was unfamiliar with the surroundings.

Chenchen asked, "Where are we going now?"

Zhang Ye said in a composed manner, "Let's hail a taxi first."

Very quickly, they flagged down a taxi and opened the door to get into it.

The taxi driver spoke in nonstandard Mandarin, "Where do you want to go?"

Zhang Ye stuck to his usual practice and activated the Lucky Halo immediately before telling the taxi driver, "Just go wherever!"

"Where?" The cab driver turned around to ask.

Zhang Ye repeated, "Just drive anywhere!"

The cab driver nodded back at him, seemingly unsurprised. He did not ask any further and just drove off.

Perhaps he had heard Zhang Ye wrong when he said "just go to wherever" and "just drive anywhere" or he misheard it as the name of a place or some landmark instead, so he directly drove straight to that place. Zhang Ye did not say anything and just sat in the back while holding Chenchen's hand. This fellow did not have any objectives now as he simply kept the mindset of leaving it all up to fate for the entire journey. He could only take one step at a time!

Awhile later.

The taxi stopped at the curb. It seemed they were somewhere near a mall.

The taxi driver said, "We're here."

Zhang Ye paid the fare and led Chenchen out of the taxi.

The clouds here were rather low. It felt like they could be easily touched just by reaching out their hands. The sky was especially clear, a limitless span of blue. It was too beautiful.

Zhang Ye took a deep breath and felt more refreshed than before.

But Chenchen looked at him and asked, "Zhang Ye, what now?"

Zhang Ye coughed and said, "Now?"

Chenchen probed, "How should we proceed from here?"

"Uh, wait for me for a while." Zhang Ye made a decision as he bent down slightly to remove his right shoe. He then activated the Lucky Halo again.

-100,000!

-100,000!

Next, with Chenchen looking at him suspiciously, Zhang Ye threw his shoe up into the air.

Bada!

The shoe landed on the ground with its toe tip pointed in a direction!

Zhang Ye waved his hand excitedly and said, "Let's go this way!"

Chenchen: "..."

Around them, some passersby were floored when they saw this. They wondered to themselves about just what the hell this idiot was doing. In this era, there were still people using the method of throwing a shoe to find their way? Did you just emerge from the remote mountains?

They headed straight!

They kept heading straight!

They walked for a full 30 minutes!

Chenchen could no longer walk any further. "Zhang Ye, are you sure this is the right way?"

"Cut the crap and just follow me!" Zhang Ye became even more guilty the further they walked. And the further they walked, the less confidence he had. But he could not show it in front of the child, so he could only persevere and curse silently in his head!

Fuck!

Where the fuck was this place?

Why was it getting more and more remote the further they walked?

"Zhang Ye."

"Mmm."

"Zhang Ye."

"Stop calling my name."

"Zhang Ye, are you dependable?"

"How can I not be dependable?"

"Then when are we going to reach the place?"

"Uh, about this..."

Just when Zhang Ye was wondering how to answer her question, they reached a location that looked like it was a long-distance bus station. This bus station felt very different from the one in Beijing as there was not even a gate at the entrance. If they did not notice the sign, he really wouldn't know that this was a bus station.

Suddenly, they overheard three to five people dressed in Chinese tunic shirts talking.

The several people did not deliberately lower their voices but they were not talking too loudly either. All of them were speaking with a northern accent.

"Why isn't the bus here yet?"

"Let's wait a little while more. It should arrive soon."

"Why is the annual Martial Arts Conference organized by the National Martial Arts Association held at Tianshan this year? Although it's a nice place, it's quite a ways away."

"It was inevitable. Who knew that there would be such a big mess happening at this year's Martial Arts Conference! It definitely has to be held at a remote place!"

"Have you guys heard about it?"

"Yes, I've heard about it."

"Who doesn't know about that in the Chinese martial arts world!"

"Hai, it's Rao Aimin from the Eight Trigrams School again. That senior is much too ruthless!"

"Hur hur, she is Rao Aimin after all."

"Hey, the bus has arrived."

"Let's go, we'll talk on the bus."

A long-distance bus drove over slowly.

But Zhang Ye and Chenchen were standing by the roadside in shock!

Rao Aimin?

The National Martial Arts Association?

The Martial Arts Conference held at Tianshan?

Zhang Ye said dumbfounded, "Holy shit! We really found her!"

Chenchen was also stunned with her mouth agape. The little kid had been holding it in for a long time now before she finally said, "You can even do that?"

During the journey, Zhang Ye brought her to buy some airplane tickets to anywhere, then hailed a taxi to bring them to wherever, and finally resorted to the method of throwing a shoe for directions, but all of those actions had actually managed to lead them to finding Rao Aimin!

Zhang Ye erupted into laughter, "Hahahaha! Let me see who still dares to say I'm not dependable! I've said that my luck is good! Look! Look at it how turned out!"

Chenchen pulled at him in panic. "Zhang Ye, the bus is leaving!"

Zhang Ye finally reacted as he hastily pulled Chenchen by the hand and ran forward. "Let's get on the bus first! We have to follow them!"

Chapter 913: Grandmaster Rao Aimin!

On the long-distance bus.

Zhang Ye brought Chenchen with him up on the bus before paying for the tickets. Behind them, a few other passengers also boarded before the bus sluggishly started its engine and drove out of the bus station. The people dressed in Chinese tunic shirts sat in the middle row on the right side of the bus. They were talking among themselves and did not seem bothered by Zhang Ye and Chenchen's presence. There were not a lot of passengers on the bus, so Zhang Ye did a quick scan and found two seats in the second to last row to sit down at. He was a bit afraid to get too close to the group but did not want to be too far away either, so he just left an empty row of seats between themselves and the group.

On the bus, those people deliberately lowered their volume, or perhaps the noise on the bus made it sound like they were speaking softer.

Zhang Ye leaned slightly forward and had to make a great deal of effort to hear what they were saying.

"Bro Liu, you're glowing! Your martial arts must have improved again."

"Hahaha, Bro Li, you too."

"I'm not as good. My foundations are poor and I'm not talented either. Back in the day, when I wanted to be a disciple under the

Zhou Family Style, they did not accept me. They said to me that even if I were to continue practicing and trying, it would still be very difficult for me to be admitted. Hai, it's already been six or seven years now, but it really was as they said. My boxing techniques have plateaued."

"Zhou Family Style?"

"Bro Li, you're fortunate that you didn't get admitted into the Zhou Family!"

"Yeah, I'm incredibly lucky. If I had been in this generation of the Zhou Family's disciples, I would have encountered that crazy woman, Rao Aimin. I probably would have run for my life if that had happened!"

"Hur hur, you wouldn't have been able to get away!"

"Yeah, I couldn't have gotten away, hai!"

They were making small talk when the subject returned to Rao Aimin!

Chenchen anxiously pricked up her ears to listen.

Zhang Ye was also trying very hard to listen to what they were saying to analyze the situation!

Zhou Family Style?

Never heard of it!

Perhaps it was a boxing style that originated in this world? Similar to the [Hung Gar](#) mode of naming?

From the tone of their voices, he could sense some fear in them, as though they were afraid of some impending event.

"The Zhou Family has really attracted big trouble this time. Speaking of, it was all because of that match all those years ago and that incident in which the incumbent sect leader, Old Master Zhou Tianpeng, fought and injured the younger sister and brother-in-law of the current generation of the Eight Trigrams Palm's eldest senior sister. The two of them suffered serious injuries and fell sick soon after that incident, then passed away one after the other a year or two later. By rights, in a normal tournament match, every participant is responsible for their own lives and whoever gets injured is down to their own lack of martial arts foundation. But that Old Master Zhou Tianpeng was, after all, one of the four grandmasters at that time and was a force to be reckoned with in our martial arts world. Even if he was up against two opponents, it was still a case of bullying the weak. Hey, but back to the point—he did it all because of his son. Hai, that is the power of a parent's love, I guess."

Chenchen was stunned!

Zhang Ye was also stunned. He could suddenly feel the little kid

beside him trembling. When he turned to look at her, he couldn't help but feel his heart ache. He hurriedly held Chenchen's cold little hands in his!

Rao Aimin's younger sister and brother-in-law?

Then did that mean they were referring to Chenchen's parents?

So that was how Chenchen's parents died?

So there were actually this many things that happened all those years back?

Grandmaster?

Zhou Family Style's Zhou Tianpeng?

In this world, grandmasters actually existed!

In Zhang Ye's previous world, the usage of the term "grandmaster" was already almost nonexistent. Chinese martial arts had fallen behind, the talent pool had withered, and martial arts had long since been synonymous with the sport of martial arts, as well as with movies and novels of this genre. Although there were still a lot of martial arts schools and classes, they mainly taught only fancy moves and stances. There were even competitions purely focused on the performance aspect of such martial arts. There weren't many martial arts masters who were recognized by the Chinese martial arts world anymore, much less

recognized as a grandmaster in the field.

But it was clearly different in this world. They actually still had such a thing as grandmasters!

There were even four of them?

And one of them was Zhou Tianpeng?

Then what about the others?

In front of them, another person of the Chinese martial arts world, sporting a mustache, vividly described, "Because of that, a deadly grudge between the Zhou Family Style and Rao Aimin was formed. Even after the intervention by many leaders of our martial arts world, including the current leader of the Eight Trigrams Palm, to help reconcile this difference, they were still unable to stop Rao Aimin from seeking revenge. She is truly a legend of our martial arts world, even daring to go against her master's wishes by single-handedly fighting her way to the front steps of the Zhou Family's headquarters. At that time, Zhou Tianpeng was on extremely good terms with another martial arts grandmaster, Chen Xi. According to rumors, the two of them were having tea together when Rao Aimin fought her way there. Chen Xi intervened and wanted to reconcile the two's differences by urging Rao Aimin to stop whatever she was planning. However, he did not expect that Rao Aimin would not give in and even went up against both of them by herself. What surprised the people of our martial arts world even more was that, not only was Rao Aimin not at a disadvantage by being outnumbered, she actually matched blows with them! She even made Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi sweat after

taking them on for several dozen rounds!"

"It's a pity that she still got defeated in the end."

"Yes, Rao Aimin still lost in the end. With the two grandmasters teaming up, who could have made it past three attacks from them? Yet Rao Aimin managed to battle them for a hundred rounds. Although she was seriously injured, she also injured Zhou Tianpeng! I did not witness that battle with my own eyes that year, but just thinking about it makes me shudder with excitement. From that day onward, our martial arts world welcomed its fifth grandmaster!"

Zhang Ye was dumbfounded!

What?

The fifth grandmaster?

Old Rao, that woman...was actually a grandmaster?

Zhang Ye simply couldn't believe it. He knew that Rao Aimin was incredible, possibly even to the degree of being able to use concealed power. He had witnessed Old Rao using her bare hands to split metal before, but never did he think that Rao Aimin could be a martial arts grandmaster, and even one of just five such grandmasters at the top of the Chinese martial arts world!

That person was still rattling off, "What Rao Aimin did at that

time shocked our entire martial arts world! Later, even Grandmaster Chen Xi admitted to his friends over a drinking session that if Rao Aimin had been born a man, he and Grandmaster Zhou Tianpeng would probably have only managed to fight to a draw with her! So you can clearly imagine how strong Rao Aimin is. From that day onward, no one in our martial arts world dared to mess with her. Also, Rao Aimin did not return to her martial sect after that. It was as if she had vanished from the martial arts community for good."

"But in the past half year, this one and only female grandmaster of our martial arts world reappeared!"

"Yeah. At that time, it caused such a ruckus in our martial arts world. Rao Aimin issued a challenge to the Zhou Family, but Zhou Tianpeng did not respond to it. I guess it was because he knew that he was no match for Rao Aimin, so he chose not to accept the challenge. But Rao Aimin was still the same old her from all those years ago. When she gets mad, no one can stop her. She went around the entire country challenging all the training halls and martial arts schools under the Zhou Family. How could any of these second or third generation disciples of the Zhou Family Style possibly be a match for a martial arts grandmaster like her? They wouldn't be able to take even a single blow from her! Within half a year, the number of Zhou Family Style disciples injured by her numbered over a hundred and more than 30 training halls and schools closed down! Because there were already no masters who could stay standing to continue teaching! They were left with no choice but to close down!"

Zhang Ye was receiving shock after shock from hearing all of this. Only then did he realize that Old Rao was actually so amazing!

When she said she would be back within a month, it was because she had gone to seek revenge for her sister. But the opponent did not respond to her challenge, so she spent half a year going around the country and bringing down their training halls and schools instead, going up against the disciples of the Zhou Family Style to force their sect leader out!

Single-handedly, she challenged the entire Zhou Family Style?

What sort of audacity was that!

The sect leader of the Zhou Family Style could not even utter a word of objection?

The members of the Chinese martial arts world just kept silent?

Then, he heard those people speak again. "Several days ago, Zhou Tianpeng finally said something, likely because he was getting forced into a corner. If it went on like this, the Zhou Family Style would cease to exist. Therefore, Grandmaster Zhou gathered Grandmaster Chen Xi and all the martial sects, including those leading figures of the martial arts community, and called for an early convening of the Martial Arts Conference this year. He sent out a mass invite to the martial arts community and arranged for the Conference to be held at Tianshan, even releasing word that he would settle the feud with Rao Aimin during the event. Needless to say, Rao Aimin will definitely show up at tomorrow's Martial Arts Conference!"

"Yeah, it will surely be interesting to watch when the time

comes!"

"It'll be super interesting. A battle of grandmasters? Who in our martial arts world does not want to come and witness this?"

"The Conference this time is probably going to be the most attended in its entire history!"

"Right, or else they wouldn't have also invited people like us who don't have any official recognition."

"Hai, rather than say we were invited, it might be better to say that we came uninvited, hur hur."

"We're just here to observe the happenings and see how the grudge will be resolved. I heard that not only is Senior Rao Aimin the only female grandmaster of our current era, she's also a peerless beauty."

"I've heard that too!"

"It's sucks that Bro Tan could not make it."

"Haha, he was really unlucky to have met with an accident at such a time and broken his leg!"

"Yeah, his invite is still with me."

Having eavesdropped on the entire conversation, Zhang Ye could piece together the whole story and clearly understand what was happening. From the words of these people, he even knew why Rao Aimin had vanished from the martial arts community those years ago and ended up settling down in Beijing as a landlord collecting rents. She did all of that to take care of Chenchen! It was because she wanted to bring up her sister's child! Now that Chenchen had grown up and became more sensible, she put her in the care of Zhang Ye and returned to the Chinese martial arts world to avenge the grudge from all those years back! Was that her reason for saying that line "if she doesn't make it back"?

The Martial Arts Conference was going to take place tomorrow?

Zhang Ye suddenly got very worried. An invite? He didn't have that! All he knew now was that the landlady auntie was going to be there, but how would Chenchen and he get into the event?

"Zhang Ye!" Chenchen said anxiously.

Zhang Ye put a finger to his lips to shush her. "I know what to do."

Chenchen kept tugging agitatedly at his arm. "Think of something, quickly!"

Zhang Ye thought hard for a while before he took a deep breath and said to Chenchen, "Sit here and don't move. I'm going over for a bit." He then stood up and took a few steps toward the seats in front of them.

Those several people were still chatting.

Zhang Ye went straight up to them and gave them a fist and palm salute. "Sirs."

The several of them were taken aback. "Huh?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I accidentally overheard your conversation just now and realized that we're going to the same place. You're all going to the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference, right?"

Suspicious, one of the mustached young men asked, "You are?"

Zhang Ye gave him a fist and palm salute, saying, "My name is [Chen Zhen](#)."

The other person blinked and looked at him.

Zhang Ye said in a serious tone, "I am the disciple of... Huo Yuanjia!"

Huo Yuanjia?

Who is this Huo Yuanjia?

Suddenly, the long-distance bus hit a bump and the thermos flask that they had put in the netting on the back of the seats in front of them fell out in the direction of Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye did not move his body. With a flick of his ankle, he miraculously caught the thermos flask on the tip of his toe and kicked it straight back up. As it hung in the air, Zhang Ye leisurely grabbed it and passed it back to them with a smile. "You dropped this."

Great agility!

Nice moves!

When the several of them saw this, they were immediately impressed. Those moves were not something that just anyone could pull off!

The four of them stood up together at once and gave him fist and palm salutes. "We're pleased to meet you!"

"So Bro Chen is also one of us!"

"Good footwork!"

Zhang Ye said humbly, "You're being too generous with your praise."

One of them asked, "So why did you greet us?"

Zhang Ye hemmed and hawed, then said, "It's like this. I brought a child with me this time, but as she was throwing tantrums on the way here, my Tianshan Martial Arts Conference invite was lost. I don't know what else I can do, so I wanted to ask the four of you if you know whether I can enter the event without an invite. Before I traveled here, my teacher had repeatedly reminded me to step out to see the world and gain some experience. But I lost the invite the moment I stepped out, so if I were to go back just like that, I won't have it in me to face my old teacher! Hai! Hai!"

The four of them looked at each other.

The mustached young man immediately broke out into a smile and gave him another fist and palm salute. "Bro Chen, how coincidental for you. One of the people in our group did not come because he was admitted to the hospital." He then rummaged through his bag and found an invite which he handed over to Zhang Ye. "Here, I happen to have an extra one."

Zhang Ye hurriedly asked, "Is this, is this appropriate?"

The mustached young man laughed. "What's inappropriate about it? We won't be using this extra invite anyway. Besides, just the name is written on the front side of the invite and there is no photo ID on it. They'll only check to see if you actually have an invite but won't look at the names. You'll definitely be fine using this to enter." But there was something that he did not want to reveal: It was fine even if they did check the names on the invites. With their status in the Chinese martial arts world, no one would

know them regardless. They were at most considered a fringe group of the Chinese martial arts world.

Zhang Ye said, "Aiyo, then I must really thank you senior bros!"

"You're so polite!"

"Don't worry about it!"

"We're all from the national martial arts world, so you don't need to be so polite!"

The attitudes of these four people toward Zhang Ye were still quite good. Due to Zhang Ye showing off a moment ago, they felt that he had really wonderful moves. Additionally, Zhang Ye's expressions and manners left the four of them who were invited to this conference with no doubts that he was one of them too.

From this, a fact could be proven.

Life is just like a show—it's all about the fucking acting!

1. [Hung Gar](#)

2. Chen Zhen is a character from *Fist of Fury*, portrayed by Bruce Lee. Chen Zhen is believed to be based on Liu Zhensheng, a real-life student of Huo Yuanjia, a martial artist who lived in the late Qing dynasty.

Chapter 914: Arriving at the conference venue!

On their way there, the five of them had a very engaging conversation.

Zhang Ye led Chenchen to sit in the seat behind them. They chatted about random topics and he conveniently fished for information about the Chinese martial arts world at the same time. He was basically clueless about everything regarding it right now.

"Bro Chen Zhen, where are you from?"

"The capital."

"Aiyo, that's a good place."

"Haha, it's not too bad."

"Those moves of yours were pretty impressive."

"I'm just OK."

"What style does your master teach?"

"My master is Huang Feihong, and I learn—"

"Eh, didn't you say your master was Huo Yuanjia?"

"Ah? Did I?"

"You said so yourself just now."

"Oh yes, [Huang Feihong](#) is my other master."

"Wow, Bro Chen is practicing two forms of martial arts?"

"I'm just dabbling in a bit of everything."

Chenchen, who was listening to Zhang Ye make things up on the fly, could only roll her eyes and stay quiet.

These men were very talkative and friendly.

They were all non-affiliates, which was a nice way of identifying those who did not belong to any sect or walked an unconventional path in Chinese martial arts.

In the group, two of them were brothers related by blood. Both were bald men with domineering statures and looked like they practiced external styles. They looked like they probably packed a punch with their attacks too. One of them was named Liu Yiquan, while the other was named Liu Yizhang, and as their names suggested, the elder brother practiced [fist-based martial arts](#) and the younger brother practiced [palm-based martial arts](#). As for the

details, Zhang Ye did not probe any further, although it was unlikely that these names were given by their parents. They were more like nicknames than anything.

There was another person called Li [Quanneng](#) who looked quite skilled. Whether he was as all-around as his name suggested was something still to be seen.

The last person's name was He [Badao](#). Likewise, his name sounded similarly quite fearsome.

They were all young men, even though there were some who looked rather old. Zhang Ye only found out that the oldest among them was thirty-one years old after he asked, while the rest were just in their twenties. This wasn't surprising as there was a saying that went "fistfights favor the young and vigorous." This suggested that only the young ones in their prime were suited for hand-to-hand combat, while the older ones would suffer a drop in their physical performance. Only practitioners of internal style martial arts might have it slightly better, like Grandmaster Zhou Tianpeng and Grandmaster Chen Xi, who continued to maintain and even improve their skills from their prime. Some grandmasters could still fight even after they turned ninety. But for most of those who practiced external style martial arts, how many sixty-year-olds could still be seen leading the charge?

Liu Yiquan asked, "Bro Chen Zhen, is this your first time taking part in the Martial Arts Conference?"

Zhang Ye nodded. "Yeah, it's my first time here. You senior bros must be regular attendees of the Conference already, right? When

we get there, I hope to seek your advice if there's anything I don't understand. Please don't find me bothersome at that time."

Liu Yizhang laughed heartily. "Of course not, Bro Chen. No need to be so polite with us."

He Badao smiled and said, "The four of us are just here to have fun. We only got invited because we knew someone on the inside, but when we get there, we're only as good as any other bystander. It's like this every year for us."

Zhang Ye gave a fist and palm salute, and said, "Then you're all veterans of the event!"

He Badao hurriedly replied, "We dare not claim so!"

Li Quanneng noted, "Bro Chen Zhen is still quite young but already so skilled. I believe he will surely become someone of stature in the future!"

Zhang Ye repeatedly said, "I can't compare to the four of you senior bros for sure!"

Everyone spoke good things and dished out lavish praise about one another!

...

Soon, the five of them came to the topic of martial arts.

Zhang Ye did not really know what to say, so he took some time to whisper to Chenchen, "When we get there, don't run your mouth off. Listen closely to me and my instructions, understand?"

Chenchen asked, "Zhang Ye, will my aunt be alright?"

Zhang Ye consoled, "Don't you know what your aunt is like? Even if anything were to happen to anyone else, she would still be fine. Let's think about sneaking into the event first before we think of what to do next."

Contemplating this, Zhang Ye couldn't help but bring up the interface of the game ring on his left pinky finger.

The game interface appeared.

Total Reputation Points: 2.1 billion!

This was how many Reputation Points Zhang Ye currently had. It could be described as an astronomical figure. Back when he was just a B-list celebrity, the greatest amount of Reputation Points that Zhang Ye had gotten was only in the ballpark of several hundred million. But ever since he had experienced a boost in his popularity, more and more people started to learn about him and the influence of his works became greater as such. With A Bite of China, the Spring Festival Gala where he performed his skit and crosstalk, as well as the large-scale scolding battle that happened

after that, his position in the Celebrity Rankings Index had risen into the A-list. With that, his Reputation Points accumulated in the game ring broke above the staggering 2 billion figure. This was even the amount that he had left over after having used the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) several times on his way here!

Now, to check on his inventory items.

As he hadn't been doing any lucky draws of late, they were all the same old items.

[Difficulty Adjustment Die] × 1.

[X-ray Vision Eye Drops] × 1.

[Pause Game] × 1.

[[Stamina Potion](#)] × 10+.

[1-Up] × 1.

That was about it.

Zhang Ye knew very well that Rao Aimin would stir up big trouble at the conference this time, but he didn't know if he could be of any help to her.

...

The journey took slightly less than two hours and the five of them chatted throughout. It felt like they had gotten very close and even had their arms around each other like brothers. Since they were all martial artists, it was much easier to become friends. He Badao nearly even decided to acknowledge Chenchen as his god-daughter along the way! Zhang Ye also spoke up and said that if they visited the capital in the future, they could just call him up and he would take care of all their meals and accommodation!

The bus stopped.

They reached their destination.

After getting out of the bus, they led Zhang Ye on a hike for around two kilometers before they finally arrived—it was the venue of the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference!

Only then did Zhang Ye realize that even though the conference was held at [Tianshan](#), it didn't mean that they were going up into the tarns or to the peak of the Tianshan mountains. That place was a national tourist scenic area. The scenic area's management would probably not allow a motley group of people like them to go up there. When they spoke about Tianshan, all it meant was the area near the Tianshan mountain range at the foot of the mountains. This place had very good scenery and the snow-covered mountain caps could even be seen from far away.

As they got closer to the venue, they saw more and more people.

With a sweeping glance, he could see at least a few hundred people arriving at the same time. They were all lining up to get into the venue, which looked like a large holiday resort of sorts. This resort was probably fully booked by the National Martial Arts Association. Inside were many buildings that looked similar to inns. It was a great contrast to the scenery that they saw on their way here.

At this moment, Liu Yizhang, Liu Yiquan, and the rest of their group ran into some familiar faces.

"Hey, Bro Pang!"

"Aiya, Bro Liu!"

"You're here too?"

"Yeah, I just arrived!"

"Come on, let's go inside."

"Let's walk together, hahahaha!"

On the way in, they introduced Zhang Ye to those people who had just joined them.

While they were in line, Zhang Ye heard some interesting news

that left him rather speechless.

A youth, who had newly joined their group and wore a training outfit, sighed, "The Conference is tomorrow, but I heard that a few masters won't be participating in it anymore."

He Badao asked in surprise, "What happened?"

Liu Yizhang said with eyes wide, "Could it be that they encountered their enemies on their way here?"

"That's not possible," Liu Yiquan mentioned.

Zhang Ye's and Chenchen's ears perked up.

That youth sighed and said, "Master Zhang of the Hidden Weapons School had traveled with his weaponry and got arrested when he went past the security check conducted by the railway police! Master Sun from an Iron Palm branch was extorted by someone on the way here and didn't have any money left for the remainder of his travels. Then he got lost and is now wandering around [Shaanxi](#) on foot! The Kongtong Sect's second senior brother of the current generation will be flying over later as his earlier flight was canceled. He's still stranded at the airport and leading the other passengers in a protest right now!"

Zhang Ye: "..."

Chenchen: "..."

Liu Yiquan sighed loudly, "What is this world!"

"Morality is no longer what it used to be!" He Badao said angrily.

On their way here, Zhang Ye heard these people talking in such extravagant ways that he had somehow gained a newfound respect for those masters and experts of the Chinese martial arts world. But after this youth gave this account to them, the image of those martial arts masters was completely shattered in Zhang Ye's mind!

1. Wong Fei-hung or Huang Feihong was a Cantonese martial artist, physician, and folk hero, who has become the subject of numerous martial arts films and television series. He was considered an expert in the Hung Gar style of Chinese martial arts.

2. Quan (拳) means 'fist,' and zhang (掌) means 'palm.'

3. Quanneng (全能) means 'able in everything.'

4. Badao (霸道) means 'rule by tyrant' or 'tyrannical.'

5. This was named 'Strength Potion' during the Quit Smoking Campaign. It should be called a stamina potion instead.

6. [Tianshan](#) (天山) - meaning the Mountains of Heaven or the Heavenly Mountains.

7. It's a 33 hour (3,071.1 km) journey by car according to Google :D

Chapter 915: All-Out Brawl!

Arrested by the police?

Extorted by someone?

Leading passengers in a protest?

Oh my god, I'm floored! What sort of martial arts masters are these!?

Zhang Ye didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He thought to himself about why these martial arts masters sounded so ordinary. But giving it some thought, it was also true that this was unavoidable in such an era. If you took the train while carrying darts and throwing knives all over your person, how could you expect to not get arrested! By the time the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference ended, this fellow would probably still not be released as he would be detained for at least three days!

...

In the Tianshan region.

Somewhere.

The people from the Eight Trigrams School gradually arrived!

Lu Yuhu, Rao Aimin's junior brother, was also in the crowd. He had handed over the cases that he was following to a colleague, turned off his phone, and rushed over to Tianshan without even applying for leave from his workplace. At the moment, he was anxiously pacing around. As he was the least skilled of the current generation of the Eight Trigrams School's disciples, all he could feel now was a sense of helplessness!

What should I do?

What should I do right now?

At this time, another two people arrived outside. It was a man and a woman.

Lu Yuhu went up to them, shouting, "Fifth Senior Sis!"

"Little Junior Bro!" His fifth senior sister strode over to him.

The senior brother beside her asked anxiously, "Where is Eldest Senior Sis?"

Lu Yuhu said, "She's in closed-door training!"

His fifth senior sister said anxiously, "She clearly knows that this is an extremely dangerous place, so why is she still so insistent on coming!"

Lu Yuhu sighed deeply and said, "Who can stop Eldest Senior Sis when she has decided on something?"

His fifth senior sister observed their surroundings. "We only have this many?"

One of the junior brothers who arrived early said, "This is all there is!"

His fifth senior sister asked, "Where is our Eldest Senior Bro? And Second Senior Bro?"

Lu Yuhu said angrily, "Don't bring them up. A lot of people couldn't come because they have been pressured by Master. Eldest Senior Bro and company even tried to force their way here! But they were held back forcefully at the training hall! None of them made it out!"

Hearing that, every one of them fell silent.

The group was made up of men and women, with most of them young people who were the current generation of disciples. When some of them heard about the Martial Arts Conference, they all started rushing over, starting from a few days ago. Some of them just made it here today, with no luggage and not even a change of clothes. It could be seen just how much of a hurry they were in to get here!

"Why did Master do that?"

"Master said that this was Eldest Senior Sis's personal grudge that had nothing to do with the Eight Trigrams School, so he wouldn't allow us to join her! He even said that Eldest Senior Sis has already left the Eight Trigrams School!"

"Master, he..."

"Eldest Senior Sis will always be our Eldest Senior Sis!"

"Don't blame Master for this. He has no other choice! Eldest Senior Sis has angered too many people this time and flouted the rules of our martial arts world. She has forced the Zhou Family Style School into a corner, injuring so many of their disciples and masters, and overturning so many of their training halls and schools at the same time. There is a written rule in the National Martial Arts Association forbidding such behavior, so the motive of the Conference this time is basically targeted at her. They're trying to gather the support of our entire martial arts world to denounce Eldest Senior Sis. Although our Eight Trigrams School is considered as one of the large sects, that is more because of the status we gained during the Qing dynasty. Our style has already weakened since then and Master does not wish to offend our entire martial arts world. If he did, then our Eight Trigrams School would definitely have no chance of survival!"

"But that's Eldest Senior Sis we're talking about!"

"Master has his considerations, so it's not our place to speak. But whatever it is, now that Eldest Senior Sis is in trouble, we

definitely have to support her. I'll try to contact the other disciples who are outside and see if we can get more to come! We can't let Eldest Senior Sis battle on her own! Do they really think that the Eight Trigrams School can be easily pushed around?"

"Don't call the junior disciples. They won't be of any help even if they came!"

"Will it be OK with just this many of us?"

"What else can we do? We can only take them head on!"

The disciples of the Eight Trigrams School gathered together and started to discuss their strategy!

...

In the evening.

It was getting dark.

At the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference, Zhang Ye had already sneaked into the venue with Chenchen using his invite. Only the organizer's staff looked curiously at Zhang Ye who had brought a child along with him, but they did not say anything or even check his invite and allowed him into the venue. They arranged for them to check into an inn on the west side of the resort.

The rooms were on the third story.

Right after Zhang Ye put down their luggage, Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and the others came over.

"Bro Chen Zhen, wanna grab dinner?"

"Alright."

"Do you drink?"

"That's a must!"

"Hahaha, great, let's have a couple drinks together!"

"Let's go!"

They headed downstairs. The dining areas were located within this large holiday resort. When they got there, the restaurant was already full, so they had to wait more than ten minutes before they got a table that had been temporarily set up on the first floor's lobby. After all, there were too many people and the seating both upstairs and downstairs were filled to the brim with at least several hundred people eating. But all they wanted now was a steaming hot bowl of rice, so it didn't matter where they were seated.

Sitting down, they ordered some dishes.

Zhang Ye could hear the conversations of those around him from all the different sects and schools of the Chinese martial arts world. Some of them were drinking wine and talking especially loudly.

"If Rao Aimin attends this Conference, then she better not think that she can leave standing!"

"She's bullying us as a more skilled martial artist. How is that the bearing of a grandmaster?"

"Our brothers from the Zhou Family Style have had it hard this time!"

"It's already been half a year and their training halls and schools have all closed down one by one. Even if Rao Aimin is a grandmaster, she can't break the rules like that. We definitely cannot forgive her and must seek justice for our brothers of the Zhou Family Style!"

"Right, supporting Old Master Zhou!"

"The Conference this time is basically a denouncement session aimed at Rao Aimin!"

"Has anyone from the Eight Trigrams School arrived yet?"

"They're not here yet, but there's nothing to be afraid of even if they are. How many people can they have?"

"Haha, that's right. With grandmasters like Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi taking helm, it doesn't matter how many of their people are here! Rao Aimin wasn't a match for the two grandmasters several years ago. Several years later, she still won't be a match for them. This time 'round, we can just sit back and watch how it plays out tomorrow!"

"We from the Kongtong Sect will definitely be supporting Old Master Zhou!"

"Our Iron Palm Sect will support Old Master Zhou too. Senior Rao Aimin has really gone too far this time!"

"Let me thank all of you on behalf of the Zhou Family Style's disciples!"

"Bro Huang, don't mention it!"

"Yeah, if you thank us like that, you're just treating us as outsiders. This sort of problem calls for our indignation, so of course we will be supportive! Or else it would end up with us witnessing Rao Aimin destroying the legacy of the Zhou Family Style!"

Some disciples belonging to several other schools did not say anything and only ate.

But some people started clamoring, shouting, and saying things

like calling for the denouncement of Rao Aimin. From the looks of it, these schools had already reached a consensus with the Zhou Family before they arrived. Grandmaster Zhou Tianpeng's social ties within the Chinese martial arts world had always been quite good. He was also a long recognized grandmaster of the Chinese martial arts world. With such a status and reputation, there were many martial schools that had a good relationship with him. With such events happening this time, a lot of the martial schools did not hesitate in showing their support for Old Master Zhou.

The food was served.

Chenchen's face was sunken and she did not even pick up her chopsticks.

Zhang Ye had only just found out that so many of those who were participating in the conference this time were actually here to denounce Old Rao. This was obviously an extremely dangerous place for her to be!

One of the newcomers who'd joined their group said, "Senior Rao Aimin is in big trouble this time!"

He Badao said in a low voice, "Let them say whatever they want, but we should not get involved."

Liu Yiquan agreed, "It's none of our business, so let's just observe. This is a fight between the gods; it's nothing we can take part in even if we wanted to."

"This dispute entails details that are too murky for us," Liu Yizhang remarked.

Li Quanneng raised his cup and said, "Let's drink. Bottoms up."

A lot of those who were eating quietly at the restaurant were people like Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and others who weren't affiliated with any sect or school. There were a lot of these non-affiliates who did not belong to any traditional sect or school of the Chinese martial arts world. Some of their kung fu was blindly practiced by themselves and they did not even have a proper teacher to guide them. They were purely born out of an unorthodox background without any roots in the Chinese martial arts world. As a result, they had no say in most of the matters in it and just kept a low profile.

They ate and drank their fill.

But the shouting got louder and louder. Before long, even those seated on the second and third floors joined in.

"Denounce Rao Aimin!"

"Drive her out of our martial arts world!"

"We can't let her continue being arrogant like that!"

"Right!"

"Well said!"

"Kill that bitch!"

"Return our martial arts world its clear blue skies! Kill that bitch!"

The Zhou Family Style's disciples were especially rowdy after downing a few drinks and were getting even more agitated!

Zhang Ye was becoming irritated from hearing all those voices. Hey, are you guys finished? Zhang Ye also stared hard at those who kept shouting "bitch" and burned their faces into his mind. You guys are dead!

Chenchen's expression was even darker!

Suddenly, a loud voice exploded not too far away from them!

"Why is it so expensive?" It came from a table of seven youths. Judging by their clothing, they should also be non-affiliates.

However, Zhang Ye was taken aback by the sight, because he had spotted a familiar face in that group. If Zhang Ye wasn't wrong, that person was called Yan Hui. During the hijacking incident when Zhang Ye couldn't hold his bladder and had to go to the bathroom, it was Yan Hui who held back the hijackers briefly and

prevented the passengers from getting hurt. He held them off until Zhang Ye returned. After the airplane landed, Yan Hui, along with some of the injured passengers and aircrew, were transported to the hospital. That was the last time Zhang Ye saw him, so it was really unexpected to bump into him here. Eh, but he suddenly remembered that back on the airplane, didn't Yan Hui use karate? Although his skills were not much to talk of, his character was pretty good and Zhang Ye's impression of him was extremely good too. It looked like he had switched to practicing Chinese martial arts now? He was also here to participate in the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference?

The restaurant waiter glanced at them and said, "That is the price."

Yan Hui's companions shouted, "There's just the seven of us, why would it come up to over 3,000 yuan for the bill?"

Yan Hui said angrily, "You guys are out to slaughter us!"

Of the non-affiliates who came to attend the event this time, most of them were not rich to begin with. A bill of over 3,000 yuan was definitely too expensive for them. The other non-affiliates around them who heard this were also shocked. Even among those who belonged to a sect, some of them were relatively poor due to the fact that their sect's training halls and schools were not earning as much as before.

"Over 3,000 yuan?"

"This..."

"Who read the menu just now?"

"I looked through it, but I don't think there was anything this expensive in it."

"Then how much would it cost for our table?"

"I don't know!"

A commotion started in the restaurant.

That waiter frowned and said, "The wine you ordered was expensive. Our restaurant fermented this wine ourselves and a jug of it costs 2,000 yuan. It's all written on the menu, didn't you see?"

When they heard that it was the wine that was expensive, a lot of those people at the surrounding tables heaved a sigh of relief as they did not order it.

Yan Hui said angrily, "What wine is this that it costs so much?"

Another person said, "A jug costs 2,000 yuan?"

Another companion shouted, "Whose restaurant is this? I demand to see your boss!"

A table of people at the other side of the room looked over.

One of them who stood up was the Zhou Family Style's fourth senior brother of the current generation of disciples. As he ranked number four in the Zhou Family Style, everyone usually greeted him as Fourth Bro Zhou. Fourth Bro Zhou said stiffly, "The Zhou Family Style School are part owners of this restaurant, so this is our property. Do you have any problems?"

The restaurant was owned by the Zhou Family?

When many of the people heard this, they dared not utter another word.

Old Master Zhou Tianpeng's reputation was too great within the Chinese martial arts world!

Yan Hui also stood up. "You're all scammers!"

Fourth Bro Zhou sneered at him. "Don't come and eat here if you don't have the money! What are you going off about for!"

"You..." Yan Hui was infuriated.

His companions beside him dragged him back and tried to calm him down. This was the Zhou Family Style School! They were a large sect in the Chinese martial arts world, and their sect leader

was a grandmaster. Even if they had to close down a lot of training halls after Rao Aimin's antics, their status as a large sect was still there. They definitely should not be messed with!

The seven of them decided to swallow their pride and let it go.

But at this time, a young man wearing a pair of sunglasses indoors, at night, suddenly sprang up and said loudly, "The Zhou Family has gone too far!"

It was Zhang Ye!

Everyone was stunned.

Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and the others were dumbfounded!

Yan Hui and his companions were also stunned! What?

They heard Zhang Ye angrily say while he pointed at Fourth Bro Zhou, "Don't come if we don't have the money? We all heeded Old Master Zhou's invitation and came to the Martial Arts Conference this time to support the Zhou Family's denouncement of Rao Aimin. Some of us came from the capital, some came from Shandong, and there were even some who rushed back from overseas and traveled thousands and thousands of kilometers to get here, all because we wanted to come here to support you! None of us complained! But you guys? After sending out a mass invite to the martial arts community, it seems like their intention was just to cheat us of our meal money by slaughtering us with exorbitant

prices? Cheat us of our wine money? Not only are they asking us to support them, they're even blatantly making money off us? What motives do you have! Where is your conscience!"

Listening to these words, Fourth Bro Zhou was in shock!

Fuck, what did I say? When did I ever fucking mean it like that!

When the surrounding people heard that, their expressions turned to anger at once and people stood up!

"Yeah! What is the meaning of this?"

"The Zhou Family invited everyone here to give you our support, so why are you still trying to cheat us of our money?"

"The bill for a seven-person meal came up to over 3,000 yuan, isn't that just like a scam?!"

Fourth Bro Zhou quickly tried to explain, "That wine was meticulously fermented by our—"

Zhang Ye instantly cut in, "This wine was meticulously planned by you guys! The bill for their table came up to 2,000 yuan for the wine, then for another table, it would be 2,000 yuan for the food! And another table would run up 2,000 yuan for the tea. No one can run from it! You're the ones who're doing all the talking anyway, so it's just going to be whatever price you want to set it at! We were initially full of respect for the Zhou Family Style School and also

held a deep reverence for Old Master Zhou. But today, we all have really been disappointed! Everyone here knows that the Zhou Family has been in an abject state for the past six months. You have closed down many training halls and your income stream must have had a sharp decline. But you can't just try to cheat us of our money because of that! Were your training halls and schools brought down by us? Why should we be paying for it? 2,000 yuan for a wine that you bought in bulk? It's even more expensive than Maotai!?"[1.]

When some of the people heard this, they had a sudden realization!

"The Zhou Family is in need of money!"

"No wonder!"

"But we're all on the same side. Surely you can't scam us like this."

"Right, why are you all cheating us of our money?"

"How can there be wine bought in bulk that costs 2,000 yuan! That bro in the sunglasses is right! This scam is way too obvious!"

Everyone was slowly getting convinced the more they listened!

Fourth Bro Zhou flew into a rage. "Which sect are you from?"

Zhang Ye banged the table and shouted, "Which sect am I from? Listen to that! Just listen to that! If we're not from any sect or if we're from the small sects, we can only suffer the slaughter of the Zhou Family! While those from the large sects get to eat and drink for free! This is a clear act of bullying! They are clearly targeting people like us from the small sects! Because our money can be easily cheated! Because we don't have much foundation and talent, we're a good pick for getting bullied! They can easily scam us of our money without much effort! Getting us to come support the Zhou Family Style School and using us as a tool in their fight, we came without questions. When we got here, they want us to pay them for our meals, and we also have to pay without question! They want our support and want our money too! They're taking us for idiots!"

A burly man who was a non-affiliate also slammed his fist against a table. "Fuck!"

A tipsy group of disciples from a small sect also jumped up in anger. "So what if you're from a large sect! Do you think you can take us for idiots?"

"Despicable!"

"You people from the Zhou Family, what's the meaning of all this?"

"You guys are pushing it too far!"

"You even dare to profit with such ill-gotten gains?"

"Do you still have a shred of martial righteousness in you?"

Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and the rest of their group also got angry. They followed Zhang Ye and stood up!

Fourth Bro Zhou was completely stupefied! Damn, what the fuck did I say? I only fucking asked you which sect you were from! All I did was ask that!

At this moment, one of the bad-tempered senior brothers of the Zhou Family Style suddenly smashed the teacup that he was holding onto the floor. He was just frustrated by what was going on and wanted to vent!

Crash!

The cup was smashed to pieces!

Then, Zhang Ye shouted furiously, "Smashing the teacup as a signal? You guys are even thinking of attacking us!?"

After those words left Zhang Ye's mouth, all of a sudden, many of the expressions on the faces of the non-affiliates and disciples of the small sects changed. They suddenly blew up in anger!

"Son of a bitch!"

"You guys are even thinking of attacking us?"

"Attack us then!"

"C'mon! Fuck! Let's fight!"

"Fuck you, Zhou Family!"

That senior brother of the Zhou Family Style was dumbfounded!

Fourth Bro Zhou was also dumbfounded!

Fight?

Smashing the cup as a signal?

I'll goddamn smash your second granny instead!

Some of the people at Yan Hui's table were already walking toward them, swearing at them as they approached the people from the Zhou Family Style!

Suddenly, the group of people seated at the Kongtong Sect table stood up as well. They grabbed Yan Hui and held him back, saying, "This is the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference! Don't make trouble here!"

The unprepared Yan Hui suddenly stumbled and was thrown back.

Zhang Ye roared, "The large sects are hitting us! They're all in cahoots! Fuck! Fuck them!" With that, Zhang Ye immediately led the charge forward. He found the person in the Zhou Family Style School who spoke ill of Rao Aimin earlier and brutally gave him a flying kick to the face!

The non-affiliates and small sect disciples were so angry that they lost their heads too!

"Fuck them!"

"Motherfuckers!"

"They were really going to attack us?"

"They're taking it too far!"

"Dammit, I'm gonna take them on!"

"A warrior prefers death to humiliation!"

That person from Kongtong Sect who held back Yan Hui was dumbfounded. "Attacking? Who's attacking anyone now? I was just—" Before he could finish, he had already received three

punches to the face. "Aiyo! Who the fuck hit my face!"

The Kongtong Sect people were suddenly infuriated!

Two sects beside them who were on good terms with the Zhou Family Style School were also angered. They kicked aside their chairs and joined in the clash!

Yan Hui rushed forward. "Get them!"

The brothers Liu Yiquan and Liu Yizhang shouted angrily, "The large sects are taking it too far with this bullying! If this can be tolerated, then what would be intolerable?!"

He Badao roared, "You want to see who has more people? Would we non-affiliates have anything to fear when it comes to that?"

Li Quanneng had already sent a flying kick and downed a disciple of a large sect. "You want to scam us non-affiliates of our money? You should ask if I, Grandpa Li, am willing to be scammed or not first!"

It was a mess!

A free-for-all!

Before the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference could even be convened, a [huge brawl](#) had broken out!

[1. [Maotai](#)]

Chapter 916: The Shit Stirrer Of The Chinese Martial Arts World!

"Fuck them up!"

"Fuck!"

"Charge!"

"Beat them up!"

"Charge! Fight it out with the large sects!"

"You thieving small sects, don't force me!"

"You guys forced our hands first!"

"Damn! Charge at them! Kill this group of non-affiliates!"

At once, chaos broke out on all three floors of the restaurant, as pots and pans, ladles and bowls came crashing to the floor. The tables were all flipped over one by one by the "martial artists"!

It was a brawl!

Close quarters combat!

The restaurant waiter exclaimed, "Stop fighting! All of you, stop fight—aiyo!" He got punched and wounded in the crossfire!

Yan Hui's companions kicked him a few more times and said, "This is what you get for trying to run a scam! You deserve it!"

The waiter cried out, "Help!"

Three people from the Iron Palm Sect rushed over at once. "Fuck!"

After exchanging three blows, Yan Hui's two companions were beaten to the ground!

Yan Hui suddenly sent a flying kick and brought down one of the opponents before he got kicked in the stomach!

At this moment, the Liu Yiquan and Liu Yizhang brothers rushed over. "Who dares lay a hand on our non-affiliates bros!" The two of them took on one each, and threw kicks and punches as they got embroiled into the chaotic melee!

The large sects were indeed the large sects. Their disciples' kung fu was definitely of a higher standard, especially that Iron Palm opponent taking on Liu Yiquan. His kung fu was amazing and his Iron Palm movements felt like they were full of power!

Liu Yiquan could only keep retreating as he got hit by several palm strikes!

Zhang Ye arrived and said, "Bro Liu, I'm here!"

Liu Yiquan called out, "Bro Chen Zhen, come and assist me quickly!"

Zhang Ye bent down and picked up something braced under the legs of a makeshift table before rushing toward them!

When that middle-aged man of the Iron Palm style heard that, he sent a palm strike behind him without even looking.

But before his palm could strike anyone, a dark object had flown straight at his face and battered him!

"Aiyo, fuck!" The Iron Palm disciple immediately fell onto the ground. He was nearly crying and had a bloody nose as he screamed piercingly, "Who the fuck threw that brick at me?!"

Many of the large sect members were furious!

"Shameless!"

"Shameless to the extreme!"

"How dare you use a hidden weapon?"

"Scumbag!"

"Take them out!"

Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and the others were stunned! Damn! Bro Chen Zhen is too vicious!

When the small sects and non-affiliates saw this, they learned from it and picked up the chairs around them to smash them into their opponents. Someone even picked up a pot of hot soup and splashed it at the Zhou Family Style's disciples!

"Ah!"

"Fuck! Who poured that on me!"

"I'm fucking scalded!"

"Fuck! Pick up whatever you can find!"

"Take them out!"

The Zhou Family Style School and several of the large sect members went berserk. They also picked up some random items as weapons to fight against their opponents!

There were some members of three to five small sects who originally had no intention of partaking in the fight, distancing themselves far from the fight when it broke out. However, an unidentified flying object came hurtling at them amid the chaos!

"Aiyo!"

"My head!"

"Goddamn motherfucking Zhou Family!"

"I won't take this anymore! Charge them!"

As a result, the non-affiliates and small sects added another large wave of combat strength to their side!

On the second floor was a table with around nine Shaolin monks. The eminent monks were not bothered by the ongoing battle around them, as it seemed they had reached a very high state of cultivation and were very calm despite the happenings, continuing to dine as though the brawl did not involve them.

Crash!

A teacup smashed onto their table!

The chief monk of the table smiled and said, "Amitābha, do not

be bothered."

"Yes, yes."

"That's right, that's right."

"Haha."

The other eminent monks also replied alike.

Then, a leg of a chair came flying over and clattered into two of their plates of food.

One of the eminent monks pressed his hands together and said, "Amitābha, don't be angry, don't be impatient."

"Don't be angry, don't be impatient."

"Let's eat, let's eat."

"That's right, that's right."

They smiled again and continued with their meal.

Next, a clay pot half-filled with hot soup flew over. When the soup splashed onto the monks, they couldn't carry on eating anymore!

One of the eminent monks pressed his hands together devoutly and said, "Amitābha, maintain our original mind."

"That's better, that's better."

"That's right, that's right."

"Extremely correct, extremely correct."

The monks still maintained their composure and were not affected by what was going on.

Suddenly, a disciple of a large sect came flying over. His whole body landed onto and smashed their table into pieces!

The chief monk said calmly, "Amitā—I'll Amitā your grandpa!" He jumped up and roared angrily, "Kill those sons of bitches!"

"Kill those sons of bitches!"

"The small sects are running rampant! They're really pushing it too far!"

The eminent monks of the Shaolin Monastery joined the fray as well, so you could imagine how out of control the fight had spiraled!

"You thieving bastard, watch out for my palm strike!" One of the Shaolin monks went straight for Zhang Ye!

Zhang Ye was someone who had eaten over a hundred Fruits of Agility, so his reaction was extremely quick. He did not even have to break out his Taiji Fist and could just shift his body sideways to avoid the attack. As he avoided it, he reflexively used the brick in his hand to hit his attacker!

The Shaolin monk grabbed his face and cried, "Aiyo!"

Zhang Ye pulled back his arm just as a Zhou Family Style boxing specialist was about to sneak up on him. Zhang Ye smashed the brick into the face of this attacker, which made the man fall backwards as two of his front teeth came flying out and spun through the air!

With that one action, he had hit both his targets!

"Bro Chen Zhen, good one!"

"Beautiful!"

"Bro Chen Zhen was really majestic there!"

"Good brick technique!"

When Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, He Badao, and the others saw this, they didn't forget to cheer Zhang Ye on mid-fight!

Fourth Bro Zhou of the Zhou Family Style School was stunned, as though exclamation marks were written all over his face as he looked on with his jaw hanging!

Even now, he still could not understand how this fight had broken out. How did they start fighting? In all this time, he had only managed to say three and a half goddamn sentences in total! The first two sentences were: "Don't come and eat here if you don't have the money! What are you going off about for!", followed by half a sentence of "That wine was meticulously fermented by our —". The last sentence was "Which sect are you from?" All in all, it was only three and a half sentences. He could swear to the heavens that that was all he said! Besides, even if he said them again now, those words should not have been considered offensive! Fuck! Then how did it fucking cause a fight to break out!?

The facts had proven again that Zhang Ye's mouth was too damn wicked. Wherever this fellow went, there would be no peace. The entertainment industry insiders' evaluation of this person was truly spot on. He was just a goddamn hooligan, a downright shit stirrer. Whichever industry he went to, he would bring about bloodshed. Previously, in the literary world, the entertainment circle, and even the education world, those industry peers were all cultured people who were rather eloquent and could speak well. Whether it was this professor or that doctor, they had had more than enough arguments with Zhang Ye. But even so, those people still could not beat Zhang Ye a single time when it came to scolding! Now that this fellow had sneaked into the Chinese martial arts world—a place where the level of education was

generally not too high—for a person that even the Tsinghua and Renmin University professors and people of the crosstalk world could not outargue, this place stood basically no chance!

They were nowhere near a match for him!

Now that this guy had arrived at the Chinese martial arts world, he was just like a wolf among sheep. With just a few words, he had caused internal strife at the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference. It had even spiraled so out of control that the fight could not be stopped even if anyone tried to stop it!

Fourth Bro Zhou shouted out, "Everyone, listen to me, I—"

Suddenly, a punch was thrown at him!

The unprepared Fourth Bro Zhou received a brutal punch to his right cheek, utterly infuriating him. He rolled up his sleeves and rushed forward saying, "Who the fuck hit me? Do you people think that our Zhou Family Style School are pushovers? How dare you people make trouble at the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference! If you want to fight, let's fight! Do you think we all have anything to be afraid of?"

Fourth Bro Zhou also rushed forward!

Then a brick met his face!

"Fuck!" Fourth Bro Zhou covered his face and cursed angrily!

"Fourth Senior Bro!"

"Get them!"

"We will bloody you today!"

"Right, we'll bloody you!"

Witnessing this scene unfolding in front of her, Chenchen was totally speechless.

Zhang Ye was quite unreliable in a lot of the things that he did, but that mouth of his could definitely be relied on to be the most sarcastic in this world! What was supposed to be a martial arts conference attended by all the members of the Chinese martial arts world had now turned into a civil war even before the event was convened!

In fact, the conflict was still growing!

Another wave of the Zhou Family Style's disciples arrived from outside!

"What is happening?"

"What's going on?"

"The hell, who hit me?"

"Damn! Bros, get them!"

When this group of people arrived, before they could even announce who they were or ask what was happening, they were already getting beaten up. They then immediately joined the fray without another word!

The non-affiliates had even more backup arriving!

"Bro Zhao, I'm here!"

"Hold on, our bros are here to help!"

"The Zhou Family is throwing their weight around and bullying us! This is outrageous!"

"Outrageous! Kill them!"

"The large sects are too arrogant! We must get revenge today!"

"Baldie, receive this palm strike from your grandpa!"

"Fourth Bro Zhou, you have often committed all kinds of evils! Let me rein you in today!"

Who said that there were no highly skilled non-affiliates?

A few of the non-affiliates who rushed over upon hearing the news turned out to be extremely skilled at kung fu. When Zhang Ye saw them fighting, even he was surprised as they all were seemingly on par with him. The Chinese martial arts world was truly filled with hidden dragons and crouching tigers. With this fight happening, all the experts started showing themselves! When a lot of them heard the shouting, they knew there was obviously some private grudge between the two groups. The large and small sects, along with the non-affiliates, clearly had grudges that existed in the past. Everything just happened to spill over today!

More and more people arrived!

100!

200!

300!

The restaurant was close to being torn apart!

The battlefield was even extending out into the courtyard and outside the resort, the sounds of fighting coming from everywhere!

When Zhang Ye, who was never afraid of too much trouble, saw

this, he shouted again, "Our small sect and non-affiliate brothers! Today's outcome is a matter of our honor! Will we just watch and allow the large sects to climb all over us?"

"No, we won't!"

"No, we won't!"

"No, we won't!"

"No, we won't!"

Many of them were shouting like crazy!

Zhang Ye roared, "Will we just watch our dignity get trampled under their feet like that?"

"No, we won't!"

"No, we won't!"

"Definitely not!"

Many were roaring in response!

Zhang Ye yelled, "On the path of martial arts! Everyone stands equal! It has never been segregated between large and small sects!"

Today is the day that we stand up to this! Today is the day that we shout to make our voices heard! If we don't shout, there won't be another chance! If we don't shout, they will soon be sitting over our heads and shitting on us! Why are you bros still watching the fight from outside? What are you still waiting for? Roar if you see injustice! Take action when the time comes! Do it with all your passion and hope!"

"Let's take action!"

"With the Zhou Family bullying us, how much longer are we going to keep quiet and endure this?"

"Kill them!"

"Charge!"

"Charge at them together with me, brothers!"

With Zhang Ye's speech, a lot of the onlooking non-affiliates and small sect members who were still hesitant earlier suddenly got pumped up, and roared as they charged forward!

Chapter 917: Zhang Ye Versus The Kunlun Taoist!

Outside, the sky had turned dark and the entire holiday resort was dark, except here at the restaurant which was still brightly lit. Cries calling for a massacre could be heard coming from everywhere!

A passerby asked in panic, "What's happening in there?"

A non-affiliate, who was injured and covering his bloody nose, said, "That bunch of bastards from the Zhou Family ganged up with all the large sects and started a fight against us non-affiliates!"

"What? How could something like that happen? Bro, bear with it. I'll go get reinforcements!" After the passerby heard that, he quickly rushed back to inform the others. "Something has happened! Something has happened!"

On the way, as he ran back, he coincidentally bumped into a friend.

This other person asked anxiously, "What's going on over at the restaurant?"

Short of breath, the passerby panted, "I can't run anymore. You came at just the right time, quickly go back and inform the others! That bunch of bastards from the Zhou Family ganged up with all the other large sects to start a fight with all of us!"

"What did you say?" The friend was shocked. "I'll go call for reinforcements immediately!"

At the entrance of an inn.

Everyone came rushing out when they heard the ruckus.

"What happened?"

"Why did they start fighting?"

"Who's fighting who?"

"Should we go and take a look?"

"W-What serious event has just happened there?"

At this moment, that passerby's friend came running back with all his might. "Something has happened! Something has happened! That bunch of fucking bastards from the Zhou Family Style ganged up with the large sects to exterminate all of us!"

Everyone was angered and surprised at the same time!

"Ah?"

"Exterminate all of us?"

"Fuck your grandmas, Zhou Family!"

"They're pushing it too far! They're really pushing it too far!"

"Let's fight it out with them!"

"Fight them!"

"Brothers! Call for help! Get your weapons, and let's kill them!"

"Exterminate all of us? I'll fucking exterminate your entire clan instead!"

With the same message being passed down three times, it had already changed from a fight...to becoming exterminating all of them!

Instantly, another group of "reinforcements" set off as though they were on adrenaline. When they rushed into the restaurant and saw the people from the Zhou Family Style School and other large sects, they charged at them while angrily shouting "exterminate your entire clan" as they attacked!

This group of people randomly rushing in made many of those from the large sects jump in shock. They were completely caught off guard as they suffered defeat after defeat and were left wailing.

Their expressions were extremely shocked as they did not even know what had hit them. Fuck! Wasn't this just about some non-affiliates thinking that the jug of wine was too expensive? Didn't the fight break out because they got into a war of words over that issue? How did it become about exterminating an entire clan? You people are looking to exterminate our entire clan just because of 2,000 yuan? Have you people all gone insane from being too poor?!

The people from the large sects were also furious. "We'll exterminate all of you!"

The non-affiliates shouted loudly, "We'll exterminate your entire clan!"

The people from the large sects yelled in anger, "We'll exterminate all of you!"

The people from the small sects said angrily, "We'll exterminate your entire clan!"

Both sides swore something as they fought!

From talking to having a war of words to starting a fight and finally turning into an extermination of clans, the entire process took only ten minutes!

A free-for-all!

A chaotic free-for-all!

Sounds of fighting could be heard everywhere and the fire of battle could be seen throughout the place!

The non-affiliates and small sects had a numerical advantage of about 2.5 to 1, but the people from the large sects had the advantage of superior skills. Even for some of the large sects' most ordinary disciples, their martial arts skills were still very good. Even if two fists were no match for four hands, it would not be that difficult to hold out. Furthermore, there were many experts among the large sects who could probably take on five opponents at the same time!

And Zhang Ye had encountered one of them!

It was a [Taoist](#) from the Kunlun Sect!

Zhang Ye sparred with him for a while using his real skills and immediately knew that he was going to be a tough one. His opponent turned out to be trained in internal style martial arts as well, and his power was likely a little better than Zhang Ye's. Zhang Ye had eaten over a hundred Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books, so he could be considered as one of the top few fighters in this pool of ordinary martial artists. It would not be much of a problem for him to take on 20 of them. But if he were to really meet with a real practitioner of the martial arts, he would not exactly be a match for that person. With just those few skill experience books, he could only be considered to have barely stepped past the doors of the Chinese martial arts world, or perhaps be at a slightly higher level than most. He certainly could not be considered to be at the master level. Moreover, Zhang Ye's

boxing techniques were not slowly trained by himself, but rather gained directly through the eating of all those skill experience books. His strength and stamina were also unable to keep up with his opponent, and his Taiji Fist only worked at times. All these key factors affected his overall ability. But fortunately, Zhang Ye's 100 Fruits of Agility were unleashed to their greatest effect. His reaction speed was not slower than those real practitioners of martial arts, so even if he could not defeat his opponent with his attacks, it was still enough to deal with him for a while!

Furthermore, he still had a brick in his hand!

With a brick in hand, I own the world!

"Watch my kick!" The Kunlun Taoist threw out a punch!

Zhang Ye dodged agilely and cried out, "Watch my kick!" But he used the brick to attack instead!

That Taoist dodged angrily. "Receive my palm strike!" But he aimed his kick at Zhang Ye's privates instead!

"Receive my roundhouse kick!" Zhang Ye dodged the attacks perilously as he shouted, but he did not move his leg and still attacked with the brick!

The Taoist shouted loudly, "Fish Leaps Over the Dragon Gate!" Then he threw himself prone to dodge the brick attack!

"Carp Skip-up!" Zhang Ye gurgled up a mouthful of phlegm and spat at him!

When the surrounding people saw that, they nearly fainted!

Roundhouse kick, your sister!

Fish Leaps Over the Dragon Gate, your sister!

Carp Skip-up, your sister!

The moves that the two of you executed were totally different from what you had shouted!

These two fellows were also from the martial arts community? Why was each of them more sly than the other?!

Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, He Badao, Li Quanneng, and some others were also engaged in battles with their "enemies" around Zhang Ye. When they saw the fight between Zhang Ye and that Kunlun Taoist, they broke out in cold sweats!

They could do it like that?

This had to be a meeting of two rogues!

On the bus, they had chatted happily with Zhang Ye and felt that

this "Bro Chen Zhen" was a very righteous person. From a glance, he could be assumed to have come from some righteous sect. But who would have expected that when this fellow got into a fight, he would actually be such a hooligan and use a brick to make sneak attacks, randomly call out his moves, and even spit at his opponent! This scene made Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and the group of people who came from an unorthodox martial arts background feel embarrassed! Why is Bro Chen Zhen's martial arts even more unorthodox than ours?!

When that Taoist had his clothes hit by a mouthful of phlegm, he flew into a rage. He was quite well-known in the Chinese martial arts world and was always reputed to be a vicious and devious person. When his name was mentioned, as long as it was someone in the martial arts community who had heard of his exploits before, they would definitely choose to avoid him. Even in normal circumstances when his fellow Kunlun Sect disciples sparred, no one would choose to be his opponent. He initially thought that he was already devious enough, but never did he expect to bump into someone today who was more devious than him!

The Taoist shouted, "What style do you practice?"

Zhang Ye threw a punch and questioned back, "What style do you practice?"

The Taoist said loudly, "The style I practice is called the Kunlun Universe Palms!"

Zhang Ye would naturally not reveal his background to anyone. He swung the brick towards the Taoist and said, "Then the style

that I practice is called the Swimming Body Eight Trigrams Brick!"

Upon hearing that, the surrounding people fainted all at once!

One of the disciples of the Zhou Family Style School lost his concentration and was immediately floored by a punch and two kicks from two small sects' disciples! After he collapsed onto the ground, his mind continued to wonder about the skill that the sunglasses-wearing youth proclaimed that he had used!

They all knew about the Swimming Body Eight Trigrams Palm which was also known as the Eight Trigrams Palm!

But what the fuck was the Swimming Body Eight Trigrams Brick!?

Which sect's martial arts have you ever come across that train with fucking bricks?

1. [Taoist](#)

Chapter 918: The National Martial Arts Association Steps In!

The situation was getting out of control!

The organizers were startled as well!

Chen Xi, the vice president of China's National Martial Arts Association, the current leader of the Huashan Sect, and one of the five grandmasters of the current Chinese martial arts world, led a large group of people and hurried to the restaurant. In the group were a deputy sect leader of the Kongtong Sect, a leader from an Iron Palm branch, an eminent monk of the Shaolin Monastery, and a master from the Wudang Sect. All of them were, without an exception, famous figures within the Chinese martial arts world, and were also the backbone of their sects, even to the point of being the strongest in their respective sects. But Grandmaster Zhou Tianpeng of the Zhou Family Style School was nowhere to be seen. He was probably secluding himself in preparation for the big battle tomorrow at the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference!

When this group of people got to the entrance of the restaurant, they were completely stunned by what they saw!

Liu Yizhang was keeping a disciple of the Zhou Family Style down with two hands, while his brother, Liu Yiquan, was furiously hammering at that Zhou Family Style disciple!

He Badao and a Kongtong Sect disciple were rolling around on the ground, throwing punches and kicks at each other!

Li Quanneng and Yan Hui were each holding a table leg in their respective hands, gotten from who knows where, chasing a group of four or five people from the large sects and hitting them with the legs. It was utter chaos!

"Kill them!"

"Senior Bro, save me!"

"Hang on! You must hang on!"

"Kill this bunch of non-affiliates!"

"We must exterminate them all!"

The most noteworthy duel was still between Zhang Ye and that Kunlun Taoist.

Zhang Ye swung his brick. "Watch out for my Huashan swordsmanship!"

The Huashan Sect leader, Chen Xi, fainted then and there!

The Kunlun Taoist dodged away. "Have a taste of my Iron Palms!" Then he crouched and swept a kick at Zhang Ye!

The eldest senior brother of the previous generation of the Iron Palm branch wobbled in place when he heard that!

"I'm going for your lower body!" The brick swung towards his opponent's head!

"I'm targeting your left!" The Kunlun Taoist threw a punch at his right!

Zhang Ye shouted, "I'll spit on your face!"

The Taoist replied, "I'll fuck your grandpa!"

"I'll fuck your grandma!"

"Are you sick?"

"Do you have any medicine for me?"

"How much do you need?"

"How much do you have?"

"I'll give you however much you require!"

Zhang Ye spoke, "I'll eat however much you have!"

The Taoist asked again, "Are you sick!"

"Do you have any medicine for me?"

They did not exchange too many blows between them before transitioning into scolding each other with everything they had, even spitting at each other!

The fighting made these people of distinction and leaders of the various martial sects within the organizers and Chinese martial arts world nearly vomit blood! What kind of fucking people did the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference invite this time!?

That Taoist's martial uncle was the Kunlun Sect leader. He was also in this group that had just arrived. At the moment, he was pretending not to have seen anything as he looked up at the sky—he could not afford to be embarrassed like this.

Chen Xi roared, "Stop it! All of you, stop it!"

Everyone who was fighting was incensed and crying out their killing intents, so why would they bother listening to anyone calling for them to stop?

That eminent monk from the Shaolin Monastery was also stunned by the brawl, as he noticed a few of his junior brothers in the chaos with bruised and swollen faces. He called out loudly, "Junior Bro [Jie Jiao](#)? Junior Bro Jie Zao? Why did you all get

involved in the fight as well?"

A monk who was currently fighting a small sect's combat expert shouted, "The small sects are taking this too far!"

The eminent Shaolin monk called out, "Stop the fight and get over here! Stop fighting already!"

Another Shaolin monk was still enraged as he spoke with a Henan accent, "Senior Bro, stay out of it! I must take care of these bastards today no matter what!"

Their senior brother: "..."

The usually mild-mannered Shaolin monks were all cursing and swearing!

Chen Xi watched in astonishment. "W-What on earth happened?"

"I don't know!"

"Why is everyone fighting?"

"Aiyo! How are we going to handle this?"

"In all the years of holding the National Martial Arts Conference, nothing like this has ever happened before!"

"Terrible, this is truly terrible!"

"Could it be that someone died, leading them to fight like this?"

"It has to be!"

At this moment, Fourth Bro Zhou of the Zhou Family Style School finally came running out from the chaos. His nose dripped with blood as he limped toward them. "Senior Bro! Second Senior Bro!"

Second Bro Zhou was taken aback. "Fourth Junior Bro? Quickly, tell us what's going on!"

Fourth Bro Zhou was already on the verge of tears, though nobody knew if it was from the pain or because he was infuriated to such a state. "Those non-affiliates were unhappy about us selling our Nu'er Hong at an expensive price!"

Chen Xi was stunned. "And then what?"

Second Bro Zhou's expression changed immediately. "Then did you guys kill someone because of that?"

Fourth Bro Zhou nearly vomited blood at that. "Then we started fighting because of that!"

The eminent Shaolin monk admonished, "But you can't kill someone over that!"

"Who did we kill!" Fourth Bro Zhou shouted.

The eminent Shaolin monk was stunned. "No one died?"

Fourth Bro Zhou protested, "Of course not!"

A leader of a small sect asked, "Then how did it become like this?"

Fourth Bro Zhou wiped away the blood from his nose and said, "The fuck I know! I only said a few words, telling them not to drink if they did not have the money. But it somehow ended up becoming a fight! They were even shouting and calling for our entire clan to be exterminated!"

A Kongtong Sect deputy leader said dumbfounded, "All this was over a jug of wine? At a respectable event like the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference, you all actually got into such a massive brawl involving several hundred people?"

Chen Xi: "..."

The eminent Shaolin monk: "..."

The Kunlun Sect leader: "..."

They all glanced at one another, embarrassed!

Chen Xi composed himself then forced a voice out from his diaphragm. "All of you, stop!"

Some of those involved in the brawl heard this and were startled when they turned to look. Seeing their sect leaders, masters, or martial uncles all here, they quickly stopped fighting.

But some of the non-affiliates were still at it!

Chen Xi closed his eyes and suddenly lifted a foot. Without using much strength, he stamped it down, and a loud crash reverberated. The entire surface of the floor seemingly shook. When he lifted his foot again, the concrete floor was deeply imprinted with his shoeprint! It was a very clear imprint too!

Concealed power!

This was made by concealed power!

Among a hundred Chinese martial arts experts, only a few could train to such a level!

"Stop fighting!" Chen Xi shouted.

This time, everyone turned their heads all at once!

Chen Xi did not depend on the one-sided story of Fourth Bro Zhou, but instead called over a few of his own Huashan Sect disciples. He listened to them as they related the entire situation that led to the fight, but as Huashan Sect was also one of the large sects that partook in the fight against the small sects and non-affiliates, their side of the story naturally did not favor the non-affiliates!

The people from the small sects and the non-affiliates were showing their anger at this, but did not dare say anything due to the domineering air of the grandmaster.

However, in the crowd was someone who was not afraid of anything. At this moment, that youth wearing the sunglasses once again "bravely came forward."

Zhang Ye brought a stool with him and stood onto it, shouting, "Brother and sisters, fellow countrymen and elders, the large sects seem to be confusing right and wrong. Are we just going to say nothing?"

With someone taking the lead, everyone who fought side by side earlier started raising a ruckus.

"No, we won't!"

"No, we won't!"

"No, we won't!"

"No, we won't!"

There were hundreds of voices of men and women, all shouting loudly with their hands up in the air!

Zhang Ye shouted, "Who were the ones who tried to scam us of our hard-earned money!"

"The Zhou Family!"

"The Zhou Family!"

"The Zhou Family!"

Zhang Ye shouted again, "Who were the ones who started the fight?"

"The Kongtong Sect!"

"The Kongtong Sect!"

"The Kongtong Sect!"

Zhang Ye bellowed, "We were scammed of our money and even got attacked by the large sects. Can we take this lying down?"

"Definitely not!"

"Definitely not!"

"Definitely not!"

The small sects and non-affiliates were emboldened by their numbers and their morale suddenly increased by quite a bit as well!

When the group in the organizing party heard this, some of the small sect leaders and chiefs also showed signs of anger. Subconsciously, they were moving toward their own disciples to stand with them.

A leader of a small sect said while stifling his anger, "The Kongtong Sect made the first move?"

A deputy leader of the Kongtong Sect was taken aback and simply said, "About that..." Then he looked over to his own disciples.

The disciples of the Kongtong Sect nearly went crazy!

"Master, we really did not!"

"It wasn't us!"

"Senior Bro was only trying to hold someone back!"

Holding back? That counted as making a move!

Chen Xi frowned and gave a look to the Kongtong Sect members.

That Kongtong Sect senior brother in question was almost kneeling by now. "I, I was only trying to mediate the situation!"

At this time, the youth wearing sunglasses standing on a stool shouted, "2,000 yuan for a jug of Nu'er Hong? Did you use gold to ferment it?"

Yan Hui shouted, "Did you use gold to ferment it?"

Liu Yiquan roared, "Did you use gold to ferment it?"

A junior sister of some small sect: "Did you use gold to ferment it?"

Zhang Ye cried out, "Hand over the person guilty of hitting our people!"

"Hand over the person guilty of hitting our people!"

"Hand over the person guilty of hitting our people!"

Everyone echoed him loudly in unison!

Zhang Ye again cried out, "Hand over the person who fermented the wine!"

"Hand over the person who fermented the wine!"

"Hand over the person who fermented the wine!"

Everyone echoed him loudly in unison again!

Zhang Ye cried out for the third time, "Compensate us for our losses! Compensate us for our medical fees! Otherwise, we won't let this rest!"

"We won't let this rest!"

"We won't let this rest!"

"We won't let this rest!"

Everyone's shouting was increasing in volume!

The upper management of the National Martial Arts Association was facing a headache regarding this problem. If it were only one or two people, it would have been easy to settle. But since this was a matter of several hundred people making trouble, they could not

handle it as easily. Although the upper management positions were mainly filled by people from the large sects, there were also many experts and talented people from the small sects too. The National Martial Arts Association grassroots' positions were generally held by these people. If the issue was not handled properly, the entire Martial Arts Association might fall into disarray!

Several of the upper management's people were getting flustered. "What the hell is going on! There has never before been a situation like this at the previous Martial Arts Conferences! What is going on this year?"

Chenchen's hearing was sharp. When she overheard those people begrudgingly say all that, she could only give a silent "hur hur" in her head. That is because Zhang Ye did not attend the previous conferences, but if he did, you guys would have been in trouble long ago!

But Fourth Bro Zhou retorted, "You people still dare to demand recompense?"

Those wounded disciples from the Kongtong Sect added, "You're all trying to shift the blame!"

This problem wasn't easy to handle, as both sides pushed their own rhetoric. But it was obvious that the non-affiliates and small sects had the greater advantage in numbers!

Finally, the National Martial Arts Association sent someone out to negotiate. He was a steward of the Martial Arts association and

also one of the representative members of a large sect. He was the junior brother of the Huashan Sect leader, Chen Xi.

This person's name was Fan Wen.

Huashan Sect's Fan Wen stepped forward. "The responsibility of this issue lies with both sides as it takes two hands to clap. Let's put this matter to rest here and everyone can take a step back. Can't we give the National Martial Arts Association some face?!"

Zhang Ye said, "No way!"

"No way!"

"No way!"

"No way!"

Everyone was just blindly following at this point!

Fan Wen's eyes twitched. He looked at them and said, "A jug of Nu'er Hong for 2,000 yuan is indeed a little expensive. Why don't we do this? I'll make a decision here and waive everyone's bill for the meal. The things that were smashed will be taken care of by our Martial Arts Association as well, so no one has to compensate anything. How does that sound?"

Zhang Ye said, "No way!"

"No way!"

"No way!"

"No way!"

Fan Wen was speechless at this. Then he said loudly, "Then what do you propose the compensation should be?"

Zhang Ye shouted, "Make the person who started this apologize! Compensate us for our medical fees! Pay each of us 100,000 yuan! That is non-negotiable! Not a cent less! We will not accept if it's a cent less!"

"We won't accept it!"

"We won't accept it!"

"We won't accept it!"

"We won't accept it!"

100,000 yuan?

Not a cent less?

The people from the large sects were getting mad!

"Bullshit!"

"Despicable!"

Huashan Sect's Fan Wen was also furious, "That's such an unreasonable demand! You people have absolutely no intentions on negotiating, right?! 100,000 for each of you? Bullshit! It would be more than enough to compensate you 1,000 yuan per person!"

Zhang Ye suddenly raised his hand and said, "—Deal!"

Fan Wen was stunned!

What?

Deal?

Under everyone's dumbfounded gazes, Zhang Ye jumped down from the stool and said, "Let's go, everyone!"

The people from the small sects and non-affiliates suddenly dispersed when the order was given!

Leaving a bunch of people from the large sects and National Martial Arts Association staring wide-eyed!

Didn't they say not a cent less?

That they would not accept it if it were a cent less?

Fuck all of your grandpas!

Wasn't that a non-negotiable request?

1. Jie Jiao (戒骄) means 'free from arrogance' and Jie Zao (戒躁) means 'free from impetuosity.'

Chapter 919: The Appearance Of Rao Aimin!

At the holiday resort.

The sky was gradually getting darker. Various non-affiliates and others from the small sects were supporting each other as they made their way back to the inns. Some of them had injuries to their legs, some had injuries on their hands, and some also had their hair pulled out. But at this moment, everyone was very friendly and helping each other, propping one another up in support. After all, they were now compatriots who had fought side by side. Moreover, speaking of the injuries that they had suffered, they definitely got off much lighter than those from the large sects. With two or three people against one, their opponents were definitely much more seriously injured than them!

"What a good release it was!"

"Right! It felt great!"

"Having lived for so long, I've never felt as satisfied as I felt today!"

"That's right. Although my nose was punched and my ass was kicked twice, I still feel really wonderful. That bunch of people from the large sects have already bullied us for too many years! I finally vented all my pent-up anger on them!"

"Same here!"

"I've been wanting to beat up that Kongtong Sect bastard for a long time too!"

"The Zhou Family's Fourth Bro Zhou has always been a dishonorable character, so I took advantage of the chaos just now and kicked him. It felt so good!"

"Hahaha, after beating up those large sects' people, not only did we get a waiver for our meals, we even earned a thousand yuan's compensation for nothing. It would be great if such a good thing happens at every conference! I don't mind even if I have to get beaten up every year! So even we non-affiliates can turn the tide! And we didn't have to act in accordance with the will of the large sects for once!"

Everyone was very excited.

Elsewhere.

Liu Yiquan took two steps forward and gave a fist and palm salute, saying, "Bro Chen Zhen, if not for you rushing to help me in time back there, I truly could not have handled that person. Thank you so much!"

Zhang Ye also gave a fist and palm salute. "Don't mention it, there's no need."

He Badao laughed heartily. "It's all thanks to Bro Chen Zhen

stepping forward!"

Li Quanneng said, "Yeah, if not for Bro Chen, we would definitely have been scammed by them today! Once the grandmaster and those large sect leaders appeared, the rest of us would definitely not have dared to say anything, but just look at how Bro Chen Zhen showed no fear at all! Admirable, admirable!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you, thank you."

"Bro, your name is Chen Zhen?"

"Thank you!"

"Good one, Bro Chen!"

"Thank you so much!"

"If you go to Shandong in the future, come and look for me!"

"If you ever go to Northeast China, I will buy you some wine!"

"Considering Bro Chen's martial arts style, uh, uh, it is really... very unique!"

"Haha, it doesn't matter whether Bro Chen used a brick or a wine jar, as long as he can win with it, it is a good weapon!"

"That's right, that's right. Bro Chen's skills, no, brick skills were truly godly!"

Everyone gave their praise!

Yan Hui and a few of his friends also stepped forward at this moment to give their fist and palm salutes. "Bro Chen Zhen, words can't express our gratitude!" Then he turned around and said to all the non-affiliates and disciples of the small sects, "And to all the other brothers and sisters, thank you so much for today. If not for everyone helping us to seek justice, we would really have been scammed by them!"

"Happy to help, happy to help!"

"We're all on the same side!"

"After they scam you, they would scam us next!"

"Right, helping others is equivalent to helping ourselves!"

"Everyone has been injured, so let's disperse for now."

"Go back and rest. We'll meet again at the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference tomorrow!"

The non-affiliates gradually dispersed and left.

When Yan Hui was about to leave, he turned around and doubtfully glanced over in Zhang Ye's direction.

A friend beside tugged at him. "Let's go-oh. What are you looking at?"

Yan Hui blinked and said baffled, "Somehow, I find that person to be quite familiar."

"That's enough, hurry back to the inn. Aiyo, my arms! Help me to apply some medicated [red flower oil](#) on my arms in a while. Those bunch of bastards from the large sects were really aggressive in their attacks!"

In the end, Yan Hui still did not manage to recall anything.

Or rather, he never even suspected that it might be that person!

...

Over at the restaurant.

The moment these people left, Fan Wen's face turned green with anger!

The others from the large sects embroiled in the battle earlier were also unable to accept this outcome!

"Compensation?"

"Why should we compensate them?!"

"We are the ones who were seriously injured!"

"No, we can't just let the matter rest like this!"

The disciples of the large sects started to make a scene.

Fan Wen said, "I'll go and stop them!"

However, he was held back by the Huashan Sect leader, Chen Xi, who was beside him. "Forget it."

Fan Wen said dejected, "Senior Bro, what the heck is this!"

Chen Xi sighed and said, "Isn't it only 1,000 yuan per person? The National Martial Arts Association will fork out this sum of money. It's definitely better that we appease everyone's anger first."

The Kongtong Sect deputy leader said, stifling his anger, "But—"

Chen Xi declared, "Has everyone forgotten what the purpose is of organizing the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference this year? Before the conference takes place, there mustn't be any screw ups. It's

more important to resolve the matter of Rao Aimin before anything else! That is what matters the most!"

"Yes, Senior Bro."

"That's true."

"Understood."

The sect leaders and elders all looked at one another but did not speak further. Yet they somehow were left a certain feeling—it was as though they had been scammed by someone!

...

At night.

In the Tianshan region.

At a certain location.

"Senior Sis!"

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

"You've finally appeared!"

"How is your condition right now?"

Rao Aimin walked into the room languidly as she yawned. "My condition is quite good. Little Fifth, Little Sixth, Little Lu, what are the bunch of you here for?"

Though they hadn't not seen her in quite some time now, Rao Aimin was still the same as before. She neither put on weight nor slimmed down, and didn't grow taller or became shorter; she was just the same old her.

Lu Yuhu said anxiously, "How can we possibly not come when you are in trouble!"

His fifth senior sister said, "Eldest Senior Sis, you are in great danger this time!"

His sixth senior brother said, "That's right. The purpose of organizing the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference was to deal with you, how could you not understand that? We are here to give you our support and a helping hand!"

His thirteenth junior brother said, "It's a pity that Eldest Senior Bro and Second Senior Bro couldn't come! Master locked—"

Lu Yuhu's fifth senior sister glared at him to stop him from saying any more.

Rao Aimin glanced at him. "That old man is still alive?"

Everyone from the Eight Trigrams School: "..."

Rao Aimin waved it off and said, "Alright, that doesn't matter, but it's useless even though you guys came here. You guys didn't train properly, so what can you help me with? It's pretty good if you don't drag me back. Hurry up and get lost."

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

"Wherever you go, we go too!"

"Right, if you're going to the Martial Arts Conference tomorrow, then we'll go together as well!"

"Let's fight it out with those people from the large sects!"

"Fight them!"

Rao Aimin glanced at them and said, "They have hundreds of people, how are you guys going to fight them?"

Suddenly, Lu Yuhu received a call right after he turned on his cell phone. He walked away to answer it. But when he returned, his expression had turned into one of bewilderment!

His fifth senior sister looked at him and asked, "Little Lu, what's the matter?"

His sixth senior brother kicked his foot and said, "Say it!"

His seventh senior brother asked anxiously, "Little Junior Bro, you have the best network amongst us, so what news did you just receive? Hurry up and tell us, what are you staring at?"

Lu Yuhu said, "Shit, the people at the venue of the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference got into a fight!"

When they heard that, everyone from the Eight Trigrams School was shocked!

"What?"

"They got into a fight?"

"Who dueled with who?"

Lu Yuhu didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "It's not about who dueled with who, it was more of a civil war! The people from the large sects fought with the small sects and non-affiliates. They were locked into a battle so fierce that they almost destroyed a three-story restaurant at the resort! Hundreds of people were injured! Even the National Martial Arts Association was alerted and had to step in to prevent the brawl from getting out of control!"

His fifth senior sister laughed heartily. "Great fight! They deserve it!"

His sixth senior brother was tickled. "To think they were even intending to deal with our Eldest Senior Sis together! Look at what's happening now, they've gotten into infighting first!"

"Man, surely that couldn't have happened, right?"

"How did the conference turn into such chaos when it has not even started yet?"

"What was the cause of it?"

"How can there be so many people fighting each other?"

Lu Yuhu also found it difficult to accept this news because it sounded inconceivable to him. "It seems that the cause of the incident was due to the organizers selling overpriced wine and the Zhou Family turning out to be part owners of that restaurant as well. As a result, someone named 'Chen Zhen' represented the non-affiliates and small sects by stepping forward to resist the large sects. That was how they ended up fighting!" Then he smiled and went on, "No matter what, the Heavens are really helping us!"

His fifth senior sister laughed. "Right, even the Heavens can't bear to watch any further!"

His sixth senior brother said, "Chen Zhen? He sounds like he is not bad!"

His fifth senior sister nodded. "Yeah, what that Chen fellow did was beautiful!"

Lu Yuhu couldn't help but laugh. "The National Martial Arts Association wanted to band everyone together to deal with Eldest Senior Sis in order to exert pressure on her and even stood on the moral high ground to criticize her, but what happened in the end? The Martial Arts Conference has not even started yet and they are already fighting amongst themselves! Those people are really unlucky!"

"Yeah!"

"Well done!"

"Which sect is this Chen Zhen from? How can he be so bold? He even dared to stand firm against the large sects?"

"I'm not sure. My friend there did not say which sect he was from either."

"What style does he practice?"

"Uh, he said it was Swimming Body...Eight Trigrams Brick!"

"What?"

"Swimming Body Eight Trigrams Brick?"

"What kind of a weapon did he use?"

"—A brick."

"Pfft! What the hell?"

"Don't tell me it's closely related to our Eight Trigrams School's Swimming Body Eight Trigrams Palm?"

"Closely related, my ass! This two styles definitely have nothing at all to do with each other!"

"This Chen Zhen sounds like a really interesting person. He must be talented!"

"Where did this person come from? I must be on the lookout for him tomorrow!"

Everyone from the Eight Trigrams School chimed in one after the other and started chattering away. Regarding the infighting over at the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference, they expressed that their present mood could only be described with one phrase: Let's have another round of drinks!

1. [Red Flower Oil](#)

Chapter 920: Zhang Ye, Enhanced Edition! (Beginning)

Nightfall.

Peace and quiet had finally descended upon the world.

The last non-affiliate from Shanghai who insisted on training his hard qigong downstairs at the inn was getting tired. He let out a shout before cooling down with the closing form, then proceeded upstairs back to his room to sleep.

In Zhang Ye's room.

Chenchen called out, "Zhang Ye."

Zhang Ye looked over and asked, "What?"

Chenchen said, "Why were you so mean?"

Zhang Ye blinked. "Was I mean?"

Chenchen asked, "Zhang Ye, why is it that wherever you go, that place would always suffer?"

"I was just stepping in to help in the face of injustice, ha!" Zhang Ye boasted without shame, "Did you see your Uncle Zhang's

imposing manner when I commanded the masses earlier? Did you see it? That's what you call appeal and charisma. How was it? They still had to agree to compensate everyone's medical fees at the end, didn't they?"

Chenchen pointed out, "Didn't you ask for 100,000 yuan in compensation? Wasn't it non-negotiable?"

Zhang Ye chided her in embarrassment, "What 100,000 yuan? We should not be too greedy."

Chenchen said, "Zhang Ye."

Zhang Ye replied, "What?"

Chenchen looked at him then asked in all seriousness, "Is this what they were talking about on television when they mentioned '[healthcare disturbance](#)'?"

Pfft!

Zhang Ye nearly fainted!

Healthcare disturbance, your sister! Could you put it any more scandalous than that?

"You insolent brat, go to sleep already!" Zhang Ye rolled his eyes and said indignantly, "If you have the time, you should be learning

to be good from your Uncle Zhang instead. Don't always learn from your aunt." But after saying that, Zhang Ye's face turned red. What good could she learn from him? Throughout the day, he had not really done anything good for her to learn from.

Chenchen nodded in acknowledgment.

After settling Chenchen down and watching her fall asleep in bed, Zhang Ye found a chair to sit down on and started rubbing his arms and legs in pain. He had received a few blows in today's fight and it was really painful for him. With this fight, it also allowed Zhang Ye to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Chinese martial arts world. He had now formed a general understanding of the conflicts that existed between the sects, the role that the National Martial Arts Association played, the size of the community, and the martial arts skills of this world. By contrast, he gained a better understanding of his own martial arts skills now. With his subpar skills, he realized that they weren't really enough to do anything. Any one of those ordinary disciples from the large sects who'd trained every day since childhood would already be equal to Zhang Ye's level. If they were more talented, like that rogue from the Kunlun Sect today, Zhang Ye would definitely not be able to take them on if they were to fight for real!

His skills were still not at that level!

The key issue was that his physical fitness could not keep up!

As the Martial Arts Conference would officially be convened tomorrow, he didn't know if Old Rao would make an appearance or not. In any case, he knew that the situation would not be good

after listening to the conversations between those large sects' disciples at dinner. Many of them were here to deal with Rao Aimin, and this made Zhang Ye feel very nervous. He did not know what the situation would be like tomorrow, but if any trouble occurred, he would be of little help with his mediocre kung fu. Not only would he be of little help, he would also find it difficult to fend for himself. After all, this was the most important convention of the Chinese martial arts world. All the talented and reclusive experts, as well as sect leaders of the martial arts community, would be in attendance and every one of them possessed unique skills that were incomparable!

This won't do!

He had to improve his physical fitness!

If not, he wouldn't even be able to truly wield the power of those hundred-plus Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books effectively since his strength and stamina were limiting his abilities!

Zhang Ye felt that he was like a child with extraordinary skills. Even with his impressive martial arts and deep set of skills, if his physical fitness wasn't there, it would be impossible for him to beat an adult of similar standing. These objective conditions would be the decisive factors. This was the state Zhang Ye was in. A city dweller who went through a nine-year compulsory education, a person who did not even do the dishes or laundry, someone who could not even pass his PE classes; even if he had learned the [Melancholic Palms](#), he could not have brought out the prowess of it! He might even twist his back!

As such, Zhang Ye was only left with one choice!

It's time for the lottery draw!

He opened the game ring's interface. It had been a long while since he had used the lottery functions of it. As such, when Zhang Ye saw the interface, he felt a strange sense of familiarity. He managed to quickly recall it, and with a slight hesitation, did not open the Lottery Draw (Two), but chose the lower grade lottery draw that only cost 100,000 Reputation Points per try. Because today, Zhang Ye only wanted to get the items from the Stats Category. As long as they could improve his physical fitness and build up his body's foundations, he would accept whatever he got from the lottery draw. As long as his foundation was strong enough, he would be able to increase the proficiency of his kung fu!

Here we go.

It was time to give it a spin and see how his luck would turn out.

100,000 Reputation Points were spent. To a person with close to 2.2 billion Reputation Points, this was just a drop in the bucket to him.

The wheel began to spin. The lottery draw began!

Once around...

Twice around...

Thrice around...

Zhang Ye went to the bathroom and turned on the fan. He lit a cigarette, and after a few drags, the result of the lottery draw was out. The needle had actually stopped in the Stats Category slice. A Treasure Chest (Small) appeared. Zhang Ye laughed as he opened it, hoping to test his luck. But when he opened the golden treasure chest, he found that there was nothing in it—it was empty and he had wasted his Reputation Points! Zhang Ye didn't know whether to laugh or cry at this bad start! In the Lottery Draw (One), the chances of receiving an empty treasure chest were extremely low. He had only met with one such occasion before in the many spins of the lottery draw. This was the second time.

Again. Let's give it another try.

Without further ado, Zhang Ye tapped the lottery draw button again!

The wheel began to spin!

Zhang Ye did not really mind the outcome of this round either. The first two draws were just to warm up. After the needle stopped, Zhang Ye had a look at the result and was very disappointed when he saw that it was a Consumption Category's treasure chest. Although some rather good items had appeared in this category before and given Zhang Ye some really important help in the past, he did not feel that he needed these today. His target was the Stats Category's Treasure Chest (Small). That was

the most pressing matter right now.

Since that was what he had gotten, he just opened it.

He flipped open the treasure chest—out came a familiar item!

Lucky Bread: Increases the player's luck stat for a duration of five minutes.

Zhang Ye had gotten this item before and even earned the right to purchase a similar item from the Merchant Shop under the Special Category—the Lucky Halo. Actually, upon further thought, the luck effects of the Lucky Halo and Lucky Bread should be exactly the same as they were the most basic of luck enhancement items. Of course, Zhang Ye later earned the right to purchase the upgraded version of the Lucky Halo, which had now become the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) item.

Zhang Ye smiled as this item was rather good too. It was good since he was unwilling to spend so many Reputation Points by activating the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) to draw in the Lottery Draw (One). This Lucky Bread had come at the perfect time!

He ate it! The Lucky Bread was activated! Go!

Zhang Ye immediately put the Lucky Bread to use!

Lucky Bread in effect: Counting down. 4:59.

Following that, Zhang Ye did not dare waste any more time and instantly started the next round of the lottery draw. He waited as the wheel spun round and round!

One revolution...

Five revolutions...

The wheel began slowing down!

Zhang Ye treated it seriously and was fully focused this time. His mind was also continuously predicting the position that the needle would stop at. Eh, it seemed like it was going to stop at the Stats Category?

It's gotta be it!

Zhang Ye immediately put in the additional stakes. 100 stakes, 300 stakes, 500 stakes. Initially, he hesitated a while here, but he grit his teeth like he was gambling and thought, Fuck it! If we're gonna play, let's play big!

1,000 additional stakes!

Counting the original stake, the total was now 1,001 stakes!

100 million Reputation Points! This was 100 million Reputation

Points Zhang Ye had used up just like that!

Fruit of Strength!

Fruit of Strength!

It must be strength!

Zhang Ye kept wishing for it in his head. This was what he wanted the most right now and also what he lacked the most!

The wheel stopped and the needle was really pointing at the Stats Category! Zhang Ye took a deep breath and clenched his fists. Then he abruptly opened up the Treasure Chest (Small)!

[Fruit of Stamina] × 1,001: Permanently increases the stamina of the player.

It was not strength?

But a Fruit of Stamina instead?

Haha, this wasn't too bad either!

Zhang Ye was feeling excited all the same. There was no need to explain how important stamina was for a martial artist. This was one of the most basic foundations of physical fitness that Zhang Ye

was desperately lacking. Every martial arts expert must have exceptionally good stamina that could be put to great use. For example, one could run farther than others when fleeing for one's life.

Of course, it would, without a doubt, be useful during a duel too!

1. [Violence against doctors in China](#). The phenomenon of Yi Nao (Chinese: 医闹; literally: 'healthcare disturbance') has been identified as a contributing factor in violence against medical personnel. Yi Nao is the organized disturbance of hospitals or medical staff, usually to obtain compensation for actual or perceived medical malpractice.

2. [Melancholic Palms](#)

Chapter 921: Zhang Ye, Enhanced Edition! (Middle)

He'd received 1,001 Fruits of Stamina!

However, Zhang Ye did not have the opportunity to eat them yet. Because at this moment, the duration of the Lucky Bread was not over and there was still a bit of time left.

0:59.

0:58.

Zhang Ye quickly started another round of the lottery draw!

The wheel began to rotate!

One revolution.

Two revolutions.

Three revolutions.

To Zhang Ye's surprise, the needle again looked like it was going to stop in the Stats Category zone. Of course, there was also a chance of it ending up in the Skills Category zone, so Zhang Ye purposely waited for a while until it was easier to judge before

suddenly putting in his additional stakes!

999 additional stakes!

Counting the original stake, the total now was 1,000 stakes!

At this moment, the duration of the Lucky Bread's effectiveness was up!

Although Zhang Ye knew that the luck effect of the Lucky Bread was quite good and had helped him get the category of items he needed, it was still just the most basic of luck effects. The luck effectiveness of the Lucky Bread was probably not enough to get Zhang Ye the items that he needed the most. He would require something at a higher level!

As such, Zhang Ye did not hesitate to open up the merchant shop to activate the Lucky Halo (Upgraded)!

-100,000!

-100,000!

It was only activated for a short time.

In the blink of an eye, the needle came to a stop!

Only then did Zhang Ye turn off the Lucky Halo and reach out to open the newly drawn Treasure Chest (Small)!

Golden beams of light glowed!

The item in the treasure chest appeared!

[Fruit of Strength] × 1,000: Permanently increases the physical strength of the player.

Hahahaha!

The item appeared!

It was really the Fruit of Strength!

Zhang Ye was very excited, and thought about how great the difference was between the upgraded and normal version of the luck items. Although it was a lot more expensive to activate, it proved to be extremely useful at this critical time! Of course, on the other hand, even the upgraded version of the Lucky Halo might not necessarily fulfill the user's wants 100% of the time and would only increase the probability of the outcome. For instance, previously at the Central TV annual staff party's lucky draw, the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) had "failed" once there. Therefore, he could only depend on himself when it came to things, and the Lucky Halo should just be treated as an assistance method at most.

He had done it!

It was time to "eat" them all!

Zhang Ye began to gobble down the Stats Category Fruits one by one!

100!

200!

500!

He chose to eat the Fruits of Stamina first. With every Fruit he ate, he could feel his spirit getting boosted slightly, while his feelings of weariness and fatigue were reduced by a little. Although it could not be seen with the naked eye and there was no detailed data, Zhang Ye instinctively knew that the Fruits of Stamina he had eaten were already taking effect. His stamina was rising substantially, no, rather, it could be said that it was rising at the speed of a rocket jetting into outer space!

1,000 Stats Category Fruits, a full 1,000 of them! In the past, the most that Zhang Ye had ever eaten was probably the 100 Fruits of Agility and the effectiveness that the 100 Fruits of Agility brought to him was already astonishing enough, let alone 1,000 of them. Zhang Ye's body was getting warmer and warmer. He felt that even if he were to run for 20 kilometers around Tianshan now, he would not feel tired at all as his whole body was currently overflowing with vim and vigor! He felt great!

He finally ate the last fruit.

Then, something happened all of a sudden.

As Zhang Ye ate the 1,001st Fruit of Stamina, he found that there was no effect and felt nothing course through his body. Afterwards, a notification appeared from the game ring on his pinky finger.

[System Notice: Stats Category Fruit usage limited to 1,000!]

Fuck.

It had hit the limit?

He couldn't eat them anymore?

Zhang Ye was speechless, but after giving it some thought, he was not surprised by it. Yes, a 100 Stat Category Fruits had already had a very astonishing effect. But with 1,000 of them now, wouldn't that have an earth-shattering effect? This could be the human limit!

Man, he actually managed to max out a stat with the Fruit of Stamina?

Zhang Ye savored his awesomeness for a bit then began eating

the Fruits of Strength!

100!

500!

Just like when he ate the Fruits of Stamina, Zhang Ye felt like his body was about to explode at any time. He could feel a surge of explosive power in his body that felt so explosive it was like it was about to explode in his body. This sort of explosiveness, or perhaps better described as a surge, could be felt as an unlimited amount of strength forcefully started filling up inside him. What was most critical was that he had eaten the 1,000 Fruits of Stamina beforehand. As stamina and strength were basically inseparable, they complemented and boosted each other's effects, causing this explosiveness to become even greater. He felt that even if he were to go and run 20 kilometers around Tianshan while demolishing all the old folks' homes en route, he could still easily do it without losing breath!

Alright, let's cut the crap.

In truth, this fellow did not know how strong he was right now.

Zhang Ye thought of testing himself to find out, but shot down the idea for the time being as he wanted to go for one more draw. He was insatiable, wanting to bring his strength up to the highest limits!

So what was there left now?

Zhang Ye went quiet. Then he tapped the "start lottery draw" icon and activated the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) at the same time, hoping for one last gamble!

The wheel began to rotate.

The needle started to spin.

This time Zhang Ye did not hesitate at all and just put in the additional stakes like a compulsive gambler!

He added 899 additional stakes, totaling 900 stakes—this number was clearly worthy of remembrance, because Zhang Ye had eaten 100 Fruits of Agility in the past. Considering the upper limit of 1,000 for the basic Stats Category Fruits, deducting the amount that he had eaten before, he would need exactly 900 fruits this time!

One revolution!

Another revolution!

And yet another revolution!

However, the needle was slowing down as it approached the Special Category zone!

Zhang Ye was shocked. Fuck, this bro does not want that now, please don't give me this shit!

It was getting closer and closer!

Closer and closer!

Ba da. The needle went past the Special Category at the last moment and caught nicely on the border of the Stats Category zone!

Alright, let's see what I got from the lottery draw this time!

Please, bro, it has to be that item!

At this moment, Zhang Ye was feeling extremely nervous, but it was unavoidable as there were 100 million Reputation Points at stake. If he received 900 Fruits of Strength or 900 Fruits of Stamina again, then it would all go to waste. He had already "eaten" those to the maximum level and could no longer "eat" them anymore. Even if he got 900 Fruits of Charm, it would still be a failure as that was useless to him at the moment!

Hocus pocus!

Give me what I want!

When Zhang Ye opened up the golden treasure chest and saw the item lying inside, this fellow nearly went crazy!

[Fruit of Agility] × 900: Permanently increases the agility of the player.

Hahahahahahaha!

I really fucking got it!

Zhang Ye quickly turned off the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) that was using up his Reputation Points. He had already reached an extremely excited state and couldn't express himself!

Eat!

Eat!

Eat!

He immediately ate all the Fruits of Agility one after another!

His eyes grew brighter and brighter!

Due to the special property of agility, the increase was not at a steady and constant rate like the Fruit of Stamina or the Fruit of Strength. The more he ate, the slower the agility increase became.

This was because in the physiological structure of a person, the maximum limit would be a fixed value and it would be impossible to break through this human limit, otherwise...he would be an alien. As a result, Zhang Ye understood this very well. Actually, after he ate those 900 Fruits of Agility, he felt he could shoot up into the upper atmosphere of the Earth. Although the rate of increase became slower with every Fruit he ate, in actual fact, at this stage he was nearing the limits of reaction speed. Even if it only increased by a little bit each time, it was still a qualitative leap forward! The difference between the highly skilled experts was sometimes just this bit of reaction speed and this "bit" was enough to decide who would be the victor!

He finished eating them all.

He had also reached the limit for the Fruit of Agility with that. If he still got them from the lottery draw in the future, he would not be able to eat them anymore!

Zhang Ye took a deep breath to calm himself, but was completely unable to calm down!

What did Chinese martial arts depend on?

What was the most basic of qualities that a martial arts expert should possess?

Not the moves!

What mattered was the physical body!

What were the most important aspects of the physical body?

1: Strength.

2: Stamina.

3: Reaction speed.

These three aspects!

As for the current Zhang Ye, he had fucking maxed out after eating 1,000 Fruits of Strength, 1,000 Fruits of Agility, and 1,000 Fruits of Stamina!

Chapter 922: Zhang Ye, Enhanced Edition! (End)

In the bathroom.

The weird sounds coming from Zhang Ye were emanating from the inside!

Chenchen was woken by that and tossed around several times in bed, but the weird sounds from the bathroom did not stop. She threw aside the blanket and got up, shouting in her childish voice, "Zhang Ye, what are you doing?"

Zhang Ye then came out from the bathroom, but was still wearing a silly smile on his face.

Chenchen got even angrier. "Zhang Ye, why are you so childish?"

Zhang Ye was in an extremely good mood, so he replied happily, "Haha, you're awake? Chenchen, don't address me as Uncle Zhang anymore from now on, you mustn't call me that, alright?"

Chenchen said, "I've never called you that before anyway."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "From now on, call me Iron Man."

Chenchen: "What?"

Zhang Ye confidently repeated, "Iron Man!"

Chenchen was already returning to her bed. "OK, Iron Rod."

Zhang Ye: "[...Iron Rod, your sister! It's Iron Man!](#)"

After putting the little rascal back to sleep, Zhang Ye reopened the game interface in reverie. Even though he had spent 300 million of his Reputation Points in the lottery draw this time, he did not seem affected by it and kept smiling. There was no reason for this other than that the Reputation Points were well spent. It was just worth it. Of all the Stats Category Fruits he wanted the most, he had gotten them all. Compared to all the lottery draws that he had done in the past, Zhang Ye had never had it as smooth as today!

He checked his current Reputation Points.

Remaining Reputation Points: Just under 1.9 billion!

It was still a lot. This was still an astronomical figure—all the Reputation Points that had been accumulated by Zhang Ye for the past year were finally unleashed. This was going to be his metamorphosis!

He made a few slight movements and could already feel that his current physical fitness was no longer what it used to be. Just an ordinary arm stretch felt unusual. Back when Zhang Ye ate the 100

Fruits of Agility, he also took a very long time to get used to the changes due to the sudden improvement of his reaction speed. Now that he had eaten 1,000 Fruits of Agility, Strength, and Stamina all at once, he definitely needed more time to refine his reflexes. Luckily for him, he had the experience of eating the Fruits of Agility the previous time and that left him more mentally prepared for it, helping him get used to it much quicker than before!

He threw a few punches.

He whipped a few palm strikes!

Even his sneezing felt much more powerful than before!

At present, Zhang Ye could even consciously determine that the 100-odd Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books could finally be controlled and unleashed to their potential now that his physical fitness had risen to a new level. It would no longer be ineffective at the critical junctures as he had finally understood why that used to occur. It was due to the fact that his body did not suit the wielding of this level of skill, therefore it was only effective at times. But everything was good now. With these 1,000 Fruits of Strength, Agility, and Stamina as his base, not only would he be able to control these 100-plus Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books, he would still be able to do it even if it was much more than that! At this moment, Zhang Ye's physical potential was just starting to develop. He was now getting into the groove of becoming a truly high-skilled martial artist, or rather, it was only now that he possessed the physical fitness of a person who had been training and improving their basic kung fu on a daily basis since childhood.

In fact, his foundations might have even far outstripped those people!

As for how skilled he might be?

Or how deep his foundations ran?

That was still unclear currently.

When he thought about all this, Zhang Ye decided that he wanted to find out for himself. He put on a coat and eagerly headed downstairs.

The cold wind was blowing like knives cutting his face. But perhaps due of the effects from the Stats Category Fruits that he had eaten, or maybe because of his excitement, Zhang Ye did not feel cold at all. He proudly strode out against the wind and stood in the courtyard, looking around for something.

Oh, there it is!

That's the one!

It was a very thick wooden signboard, on which the phrase "Welcome, passing heroes" was written. It belonged to the inn and was around five centimeters thick. It was not hung up on anything and just left on the ground next to the inn.

The thickness seemed fine and the hardness was also quite suitable, likely to be made of solid wood. Zhang Ye got ready to use it as a test subject to see how his physical fitness was now, and if he would be able to compare to those truly skilled martial artists.

Come on!

Zhang Ye steadied his breathing and circled around the sign twice. This was to calm himself down, while warming up his body at the same time. Then he took a deep breath, and with a swift hand movement, an opening form of the Taiji Fist was easily conjured by him. His right hand moved across his body and his left hand retracted, all in one swift motion. Compared to when he could barely summon up the skill back then, it formed a sharp contrast. With that, Zhang Ye's entire momentum was completely different from before!

In the dead of the night, he dared not shout his intent but simply did so in his mind!

With a push of his hands, all the strength in his body seemingly gathered into his right palm in an instant. He took a step forward and suddenly expelled the force from his right palm and struck it into the wooden signboard, hard!

Smash!

A loud crash resounded!

Splinters flew!

Zhang Ye slightly grimaced in pain with that, but the moment his hands retracted, he was astonished to see that the thick wooden signboard was left with a deep palm impression. The top half of the wooden signboard was cracked apart and the word "welcome" was split in twain!

Zhang Ye looked at his right palm, dumbfounded, then looked back at the wooden signboard.

Fuck!

Was...was I the one who did that?

He was in a slight state of disbelief. He subconsciously lifted his leg rather high and stomped down hard, only to hear a loud bang. The wooden signboard was once again broken further by the large force!

Zhang Ye was surprised, as he knew that this was not some sort of Taiji Fist move, nor was it any specialized skill, but the effect of his current physical fitness combined by his pure brute strength and stamina! Damn, has this bro become this awesome now?

Just when Zhang Ye was secretly getting excited over himself, a cry suddenly came from the upstairs of the inn!

"What was that noise?"

"This is bad!"

"There's an assassin!"

In an instant, the entire inn was brightly illuminated by countless lights!

After the battle with the large sects tonight, many of these small sects' disciples and those non-affiliates were on high alert. No one dropped their guard; they were all extremely sensitive to any movements around them!

Zhang Ye nearly fainted when he heard that!

An assassin?

Assassin, your grandpa!

At this moment, he couldn't hide even if he wanted to!

A lot of people had already rushed out to the entrance of the inn by now. Liu Yiquan and Liu Yizhang were also among them. Some of them were holding staves, some holding teapots. There were all sorts of weapons in hand, everything imaginable. There were even some who were still in their pajamas and holding a clothes hanger. Clearly, a lot of them had just randomly grabbed a "weapon" when they ran down here in haste.

When they saw that wooden signboard, everyone was shocked!

"This..."

"What an exceptional palm technique!"

"What kind of strength is that?"

Then, many of them looked at Zhang Ye.

He Badao asked, "Bro Chen Zhen, what happened here?"

Yan Hui said in astonishment, "This wooden signboard was..."

A female disciple of a small sect also asked, "Bro Chen, you were the first to get here. What on earth happened?"

From the other side, the innkeeper and a few employees had also rushed over when they heard the commotion. When they saw the splintered and cracked wooden signboard, they all started scolding and cursing!

"Who was it?"

"Which son of a bitch is so cruel!"

"Th-This is solid old wood! It's an item that's been passed down for many decades at our inn!"

"Who the hell did it? Step forward now! Which motherfucker was it!"

The innkeeper was raging mad and kept crying out in anger!

When Zhang Ye saw that over a hundred of these people were looking at him, he sighed in his mind. After that, he realized that there was no way to hide from this. He took a deep breath and suddenly roared angrily, "The large sects are too shameless!"

Everyone was stunned.

Then, they became infuriated!

"It's the people from the large sects!"

"Holy shit!"

"Judging from the damage, it was obviously the work of the Iron Palm! And it's likely to be one of the experts from an Iron Palm branch!"

"What do they mean by this?"

"Is this a demonstration?! Are they trying to show us something?!"

"Look, the word "welcome" has been split in half. They're obviously trying to slap our faces by saying that their large sects do not welcome us at all! They want us to get the fuck out of here!"

"Despicable!"

"The large sects are too despicable!"

"Carrying out a sneak attack in the middle of the night, what kind of hero can they call themselves!"

"This is infuriating! I'm furious!"

Everyone started cursing!

The innkeeper was also swearing nonstop, "Fucking large sects! I'll fuck your grandmas!"

The several inns located in the holiday resort were all independently operated by their owners. The large sects and the non-affiliates had essentially been arranged to stay apart and were all housed at different inns. For example, the inn across from them was the base of several large sects.

The shouting was so loud it woke those staying at the inn across

the way.

The windows were all pushed opened one by one as those people from the large sects peered out.

"What's the matter?"

"Why are you guys shouting in the middle of the night?"

"What happened?"

With that, the non-affiliates looked over at once and stared at those large sect disciples angrily. The powder keg was on the verge of exploding!

Finally, a Kongtong Sect senior brother who was involved in the fight earlier yelled at them in a strong northeastern accent, "What're ya lookin' at?"

Liu Yiquan was infuriated. "You! So what!"

Another large sect's disciple was peeved and said, "Look again, I dare ya!"

The non-affiliates and small sect disciples shouted in unison, "Then we dare!"

The people from the large sects shouted in unison, "What're ya lookin' at?!"

The non-affiliates and small sect disciples shouted in unison, "You! So what!"

The people from the large sects shouted in unison, "Look again, we dare ya!"

The non-affiliates and small sect disciples shouted in unison, "Then we dare!"

More and more people emerged, and more and more people joined in!

The windows of the large sects' people were all open now, while the people from the small sects and the non-affiliates gradually gathered in the courtyard after coming downstairs!

"What're ya lookin' at?!"

"You! So what!"

"Look again, we dare ya!"

"Then we dare!"

From 12:10 AM onward, the large sects and those from the small sects with the non-affiliates kept at each other until it was past 2 AM. For a full two hours, everyone was pointing and scolding at each other in the cold wind!

As the person responsible, and the only person who knew the truth, Zhang Ye felt a little guilty. He coughed and wiped the sweat off his forehead, feeling rather sorry for all this.

The large sects: "What're ya lookin' at?!"

"You! So what!" Zhang Ye shouted angrily alongside everyone else!

So, what is a hooligan?

This is a goddamned hooligan!

1. In Chinese, Zhang Ye wanted to be addressed as Iron Man (Gāngtiě Xiá), but Chenchen calls him Gāngguǎn Xiá instead, in reference to a terrible Chinese movie called [Pole Dancing Queen](#) (one hour long, NSFW, no English subtitles). As for why it is Iron Rod now, set your mind free and imagine it however you like!

Chapter 923: The National Martial Arts Conference Begins!

The next day.

On the day of the Martial Arts Conference.

Beautiful snowflakes were lightly floating down from the sky.

Since morning, people were gradually arriving at the main venue located on a hilltop on the eastern side of the holiday resort. No one knew if this was part of the holiday resort itself, or if it was a different scenic area, but the scenery was extremely beautiful anyway. Birds and flowers...there were none of any of that! There was only a single pathway leading up and down to the peak where a wide platform stood. This place was set up long ago by the organizers, with horizontal banners, a fight ring, [plum blossom pillars](#), and assorted weapons. But upon a closer inspection, none of the weapons had live edges. The weapons were mainly just used for training and performances.

A broadcast continuously blasted from the top of the hill.

"Welcome, all members of the martial arts community, to this year's Martial Arts Conference organized by the National Martial Arts Association. The event this time is proudly sponsored by Tianshan Holiday Resorts, Nu'er Hong Wine Enterprises, and Strong Brand Red Flower Medicated Oil."

Other than the large area designated for the fight ring, the rest of the venue was divided into many sections as well.

There was an area for the Huashan Sect.

The Kunlun Sect.

The Shaolin Monastery.

The Wudang Sect.

The large sects had many disciples and members, with each having around 10 to 20 members turning up for the event, so they were allocated a separate seating area by themselves. As for the small sects, some only had one or two representatives, while the non-affiliates were here on their own, so there was no way to properly designate an area for them so all of these people were squeezed into one area.

A lot of those who had just arrived immediately started to chat with others.

"Hey, Old Wang!"

"Yo, Old Chen!"

"Why are you limping?"

"My leg hasn't healed yet, how's your nose?"

"It's fine. I've already bandaged it."

"Why were you so late? Didn't we arrange to meet at 8 AM?"

"Hai, don't mention it. The inn that I was staying at last night was provoked by those people from the large sects. They even smashed the signboard of the inn, so a bunch of us from the small sects and non-affiliates got into an argument with them until 2 AM this morning! I did not get much sleep at all. I only just got up, but lot of people are still in bed right now!"

"Haha, I heard about that!"

"You know about it too?"

"Of course! An argument in the middle of the night involving more than two hundred people, how could anyone not hear of that? The non-affiliates near me were thinking of going over to back you guys up. We even readied our weapons, but when we saw that it didn't escalate into a fight, we stayed put instead! Those large sect members are too despicable!"

"Despicable to the extreme!"

"They're practically shameless!"

"Come on, let's head over there to get a seat."

"Right, we won't sit together with those from the large sects!"

Those non-affiliates started their scolding immediately after they reached the venue. Some of those who were allocated seats at an area close to the large sects harrumphed as they carried and moved their chairs 100 meters away to keep their distance!

When the large sects saw this, they just stared angrily and did the same by carrying their chairs in the opposite direction, keeping their distance from the non-affiliates and small sects.

One side went left.

The other side went right.

Both sides marked a clear distinction between each other!

At this moment, the sunglasses-wearing Zhang Ye led Chenchen up the hill. Right when he arrived, a number of the non-affiliates and small sects' disciples waved to him warmly, as though they knew him very well!

"Chen Zhen!"

"Bro Chen!"

"Good morning, Bro Chen Zhen."

"Are your injuries better? How'd you sleep?"

Zhang Ye smiled back at everyone and greeted them.

Some of the non-affiliates who had just arrived today still didn't know about the events of last night. They all looked at Zhang Ye with some uncertainty.

A small sect's junior sister who had bandages wrapped around her head met with an old acquaintance and immediately pulled him over to introduce him. "Senior Bro Sun, let me introduce you to Bro Chen Zhen. When we were bullied by the others last night, it was all thanks to Bro Chen, who stepped forward chivalrously to lead us to battle against the large sects. Then late into the night, it was also Bro Chen who stepped up first and led everyone to scold back at the large sects' members throughout the entire night. He's a really nice person, and a really loyal friend!"

When Senior Brother Sun heard this, he gave a fist and palm salute in admiration, saying, "Bro Chen Zhen, pleasure to meet you! I couldn't make it here on time yesterday, so I wasn't of much help. How shameful."

Zhang Ye returned the fist and palm salute. "You're too polite. I was just stepping in to help in the face of injustice!"

A non-affiliate whose arm was bandaged up said, "Bro Chen

Zhen, let me introduce a martial arts expert to you also!"

Another small sect member who was also taped up with gauze said, "Old Bro Chen Zhen, this is Senior Liu from Dahu Medical Hall. He would like to get to know you too!"

"Bro Chen Zhen..."

"Bro Chen..."

"Big Brother Chen..."

"Sunglasses Bro..."

"Senior Chen..."

Quite a number of people found their way over and some even addressed him as "senior."

Chenchen looked around at all these people and was at a loss.

Although this was Zhang Ye's first time participating in the Martial Arts Conference—or perhaps to phrase it better, this was the first time that he'd sneaked into a martial arts conference through his acting skills—in just a single night, he had totally integrated into the circle, becoming a mini-celebrity among this group of people and was very well respected by them. Thus, the facts had proven yet another point. If you're a piece of gold, you'll

still shine brightly no matter where you are. But if you're a stick, then you should be able to stir up some shit no matter where you go!

Then, the Huashan Sect members arrived.

Grandmaster Chen Xi led his people in. All his disciples were dressed in custom-made attire and they walked in a tight formation, making them look very professional. The only flaw was that some of the people in the group were limping or bandaged. Someone in the group even found a wooden stick from somewhere to use as a crutch as they walked in.

Following them, over a dozen Taoists from the Kunlun Sect arrived. There were a total of 17 of them, but 15 had bruised and swollen faces. One of them even had his head wrapped in thick bandages.

Next were the eminent monks of Shaolin Monastery who made an entrance by "strolling" into the venue. One of the eminent monks had his beard pulled off, one of them had a black eye, and one of them kept his mouth closed and at times exposed his teeth to show two missing front teeth. It was an extremely tragic sight to behold.

The sects all entered one by one into the venue.

The National Martial Arts Association's upper echelons were looking at everyone that arrived and could only be speechless at their appearances.

Suddenly, another person walked up from the bottom of the hill.

It was Master Sun, from one of the Iron Palm branches. He held a very senior position in the Iron Palm Sect!

"Ah, Master Sun!"

"Martial Uncle!"

"Martial Uncle!"

"You're here?"

"Didn't you meet with some trouble on the way here?"

A lot of the Iron Palm branches' disciples were pleasantly surprised and came rushing over to his side.

Yes, this was the highly skilled Master Sun who had been extorted and ended up getting lost in Shaanxi. Thanks to the help of fellow martial artists who rushed there to aid him, he finally managed to make his way here today!

But the Iron Palm's Master Sun did not answer them. When he arrived at the hilltop, he was dumbfounded by what he saw. Seeing the disciples of the Iron Palm branches all bruised, with swollen faces, then looking at the eminent monks of Shaolin Monastery

who were missing a beard and two front teeth, and then finally seeing all the experts of the other sects limping and looking defeated, the entire venue seemed very tragic. Almost everyone here was in bandages. Master Sun could not react in time to this!

Fuck!

What on earth happened here?

Why was everyone in such an abysmal state?

Wasn't today supposed to be the Martial Arts Conference? Or was this actually a gathering of the disabled instead!?

For a brief moment, Master Sun wondered if he had come to the wrong place!

1. [Plum blossom pillars](#)

Chapter 924: The Eight Trigrams School arrives!

Master Sun said angrily, "What's going on here? Why is everyone in such a sorry state?"

When they saw an elder of their sect, the Iron Palm branches' disciples started complaining to him.

"Martial Uncle!"

"You're finally here!"

"There was a fight yesterday!"

"The small sects and non-affiliates went too far!"

"They even framed our Iron Palm Sect!"

The several of them kept pointing in the direction of the small sects and non-affiliates.

The people from the small sects and non-affiliates were having none of it. Clearly, it was you people from the large sects who colluded with each other to scam our money. Your Iron Palm Sect even came over for a sneak attack in the middle of the night, yet here you are trying to shift the blame? In the blink of an eye, the small sects and non-affiliates all glared at them. Several hundred

sets of eyes were now staring down the Iron Palm Sect!

Master Sun was furious and glowered back at them. He pointed at them and uttered a line that would probably get voted by netizens as the most likely to trigger the next world war. "What're ya lookin' at?" He did not know what had happened yesterday, but as that was his usual way of talking, he just said it like how would have anyway.

As a result, it escalated the entire situation!

The small sects and non-affiliates were suddenly angered and over a hundred people aggressively pointed back at him, saying in unison, "You! So what!"

It was deafening!

The reply was too uniform!

It was so uniform that it felt like he was watching the 50th anniversary military parade!

Master Sun, who had never witnessed such a strong show of force before, was startled. Fuck! What are you all trying to do? Did you people practice this beforehand? Why does it seem like everyone shot up!

The large sects were infuriated. They kicked aside their chairs and sprang up, then reflexively reacted by pointing at those several

hundred people and shouting, "Look again, we dare ya!"

Master Sun jumped again when he heard so many people behind him shouting back. He stared with his mouth agape at his sect's disciples, as well as those from the large sects. Fuck, why are all of you able to do this so uniformly!?

The non-affiliates pointed. "Then we dare!"

The large sects pointed. "What're ya lookin' at!"

The small sects pointed. "You! So what!"

The large sects pointed. "Look again, we dare ya!"

The small sects and non-affiliates pointed. "Then we dare!"

There, they were at it again!

Chen Xi covered his face in dismay!

Those from the National Martial Arts Association were also getting quite fed up by this!

At this moment, the Zhou Family arrived.

Grandmaster Zhou Tianpeng and the Zhou Family Style's

disciples were the last batch of attendees to arrive at the venue. Probably due to the Zhou Family Style's disciples being the center of conflict last night, they were the main targets of the non-affiliates, who "took care" of them. Their number of injured personnel was also much higher than the others. At least five people were limping, leading to their late arrival in getting up to the hilltop. When the Zhou Family finally got up here, they were also left speechless by the scene unfolding in front of them. Zhou Tianpeng's expression instantly became very strange!

This...

What the hell is this!

Zhou Tianpeng stayed silent.

Around him, there were sighs all around.

"Hai!"

"What's going on with this year's Martial Arts Conference!"

"What a shame! What a shame!"

"How did it end up like this!"

"This is unwatchable! What a mess!"

"Luckily this is just an internal meet and no outsiders are present!"

A few high-ranking seniors of the Chinese martial arts world marveled at the happenings. When had any of the past Martial Arts Conferences not been a flourishing and vibrant event, with everyone showing a deep interest in the pursuit of a higher level of martial arts, exchanging blows and learning from one another. But why did this year's conference devolve into such strife?

"This won't do. Where is the decency, where has all the decency gone to!" An 80-year-old veteran of the Chinese martial arts world could no longer watch. He was so infuriated that his mustache became ruffled as he said, "We have to teach them a lesson!" Then he pointed in a random direction, "All of you, shut up! Chinese martial arts emphasizes the self-cultivation of one's body and moral character. It is important to train your breathing and calm your hearts, but you all—"

The people over there reflexively reacted by pointing at him. "What're ya lookin' at!"

The old veteran nearly fainted from anger, as his temper flared too. "You! So what!"

Everyone: "Look again, we dare ya!"

The old veteran flicked his sleeves and roared angrily, "Then I dare!"

The old veteran, who was just questioning about values, had immediately joined in the scolding battle at the next moment!

Fan Wen: "..."

Chen Xi: "..."

Zhou Tianpeng: "..."

After the National Martial Arts Association spent a long time trying to calm everyone down, even needing Chen Xi and Zhou Tianpeng to act, the crowd finally ceased all their unpleasant activities and gradually quieted down.

After the farce, the venue was in total disarray. The main venue of the conference which had been neatly set up ahead of time was filled with scattered chairs and littered with spilled mineral water bottles.

Zhou Tianpeng walked up into the fight ring and picked up the microphone that was placed in there. He tested the sound system before looking down at everyone below the ring. "I am Zhou Tianpeng, the incumbent sect leader of the Zhou Family Style School and the vice president of the National Martial Arts Association. I believe all of you should know me, so I won't go into an in-depth introduction."

Below the ring, some people gave him their support.

"Sect Leader Zhou, who wouldn't know you."

"Yeah, do you even need an introduction?"

"Haha!"

Zhou Tianpeng smiled. "There are always new friends joining us for the first time."

It could be seen that Zhou Tianpeng commanded a lot of respect in the Chinese martial arts world. Even among those from the small sects and non-affiliates, there was no sign of any disrespect at this moment.

Below the ring, Zhang Ye deliberately observed him for a while. He was a man in his forties or fifties, and did not really look to have an outstanding physique. Although he couldn't be described as lean, he wasn't considered burly either. He looked to be around 1.7 meters tall and probably weighed around 60 kilograms or so. In the chilly weather with cold winds blowing, he only wore a single-layered black training robe that had the Zhou Family Style's logo printed on it. Just standing there, his aura was very domineering and anyone would know immediately that he was a tough person to deal with.

Was this what it meant to be a grandmaster in today's world of Chinese martial arts? It was quite different from what Zhang Ye had imagined, mainly because he wasn't really good looking. But when he remembered Rao Aimin's sharp tongue and stingy character, Zhang Ye was still somewhat relieved. Compared to her,

these Grandmasters Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi still had the demeanor of a grandmaster.

Zhou Tianpeng then continued, "Dear friends who have traveled from afar, welcome to this year's National Martial Arts Conference. Before the commencement of today's event, there is a piece of good news that I would like to share with everyone." With that, he looked at Chen Xi and said, "Old Chen, why don't you do it?"

In the audience, Chen Xi waved it off and said with a laugh, "I'll let you announce it instead."

Zhou Tianpeng explained, "The National Martial Arts Association has always been fighting to get a special fiscal fund injection from the country, and it has finally been approved. The funding is substantial and will involve many aspects, like the restoration of the sect and school grounds, reimbursing travel expenses, and subsidizing the taxes involved in the opening of new training halls. All of the funding will be used in support of the building and protection of our Chinese martial arts world's intangible cultural assets. As long as the sects and schools are registered with the National Martial Arts Association, everyone can enjoy this subsidy. If your martial sects don't have a long enough history, or if the martial arts style being practiced is not officially recognized in the books, you may still apply for the funding, subject to our approval. If it doesn't pass, don't worry. Because the subsidy will still be given out without being a single cent less than needed. If the National Martial Arts Association doesn't have enough funding, our Zhou Family will chip in the difference!"

After that announcement, everyone suddenly got a little bit excited!

"We have money now?"

"This is great!"

"It's finally been approved!"

"This is a real cause for celebration!"

"Yeah, the government has finally loosened its purse strings!"

"Grandmaster Zhou, how can we make you pay the expenses as well!"

In the audience, Chen Xi smiled and added, "This issue, the National Martial Arts Association, Old Zhou, and I put in a lot of effort to make it work. It wasn't easy, and Old Zhou contributed a lot to push this through. When we met up a few days ago, he said that if the money wasn't enough to go around, he would fork out the additional amount."

The martial artists in the audience immediately gave their gratitude.

"Thank you, Grandmaster Chen!"

"Thank you, Grandmaster Zhou!"

"Sect Leader Zhou, thank you!"

"Thank you for keeping us in mind! It's really difficult to set up a martial arts training hall these days to bring in new disciples and to hand down our legacies! Not many young people have the determination to persevere!"

"Yeah, although everyone seems to be doing well, it has also been really hard!"

"Thank you!"

Zhou Tianpeng smiled. "We're all colleagues of the martial arts world; it's only right to help each other out. Since the Zhou Family has a slightly better income than most of the schools here, we must definitely take on the responsibility."

Other than the large sects that were deeply rooted in society—like the Zhou Family Style School which had set up training halls all over the country, or a well-known sect like the Shaolin Monastery which had even become a national tourism spot—the smaller sects, which also covered large sects like the Huashan Sect, did not have much income to speak of and were in fact very poor. Otherwise, they wouldn't have fought so aggressively over such a simple thing as the meal money. When Zhou Tianpeng stepped forward with his offer, even those from the small sects and non-affiliates appreciated his good intentions!

In the audience, the conference officially kicked off and moved onto the main event.

According to each year's arrangements, the opening event always started with the various sects performing a demonstration of their martial arts.

The first sect to do this today were the disciples of the Huashan Sect. Just over a decade ago, the Huashan Sect was not considered a large sect at all. But ever since Chen Xi reached the pinnacle and was recognized as a grandmaster, the Huashan Sect welcomed a period of expansion and quickly increased their number of disciples. In today's demonstration, they chose to showcase their sect's sword formation!

At least a dozen disciples were involved.

They went into the ring.

They put on an elaborate sword dance.

But what was meant to be a beautiful image was not so this year. Every one of the participants was wounded and bandaged, and looking at the dozen or so Huashan Sect disciples injured and limping as they brandished their swords, a lot of the martial artists below the ring formed the mental image of a grass mud horse galloping across their vision!

Next up was the Shaolin Monastery. One of their monks

successfully performed the Iron Head skill with his head wrapped with bandages.

Then it was the Iron Palm Sect's turn as a disciple supported by a crutch demonstrated an Iron Palm routine, while rooted to the spot.

This was immediately followed by the Kunlun Sect's wounded, erm, heroes, who took to the ring.

"Hah!"

"Heh!"

"He!"

"Hoo!"

Those bros were really putting in a lot of effort into their performances. However, it resulted in an accident at the next moment. One of the Kunlun Sect's performers sprained his waist while going through their sequence and cried out with a loud "aiyo" as he sat down unable to move. His fellow disciples around him then started panicking because of this, before several people ran into the ring and carried him out. The Kunlun Sect's performance had no choice but to cease. Meanwhile, the Kongtong Sect disciples, who were up next, limped into the ring in a hurry with their crutches to rescue things and started their performance.

Zhang Ye could only roll his eyes.

A proper event like the Martial Arts Conference had become like a post-earthquake relief donation site!

Suddenly, the crowd stirred!

"They're here!"

"Ah!"

"Quick, look!"

"They're really here!"

No one bothered to watch the performance anymore as their gazes all fell on the pathway leading up to the hilltop behind them!

Chen Xi wore a dignified expression.

Zhou Tianpeng was resting his mind with his eyes closed.

Chenchen anxiously looked over!

Zhang Ye and everyone else also turned around to see!

There was only one thing that could make everyone turn their heads like this—the arrival of the Eight Trigrams School!

Chapter 925: Rao Aimin's appearance!

The Eight Trigrams School received a lot of attention from everyone.

Under everyone's gaze, the Eight Trigrams School's disciples walked up one by one from the small pathway leading up to the hilltop. There were men and women, both young and middle-aged. All of them were wearing their Eight Trigrams School's robes with a black and white Eight Trigrams pattern printed on the front and back. It was an awe-inspiring sight.

"They're finally here!"

"They really dared to come!"

"Look, that's the fifth disciple of this generation's Eight Trigrams Palm, Song Jiao!"

"The Eight Trigrams School's Xu Fan is here too!"

"Who is that? Why have I never seen him before?"

"He's the ninth disciple of this generation's Eight Trigrams Palm. He's called Zhao Yunlong. He doesn't usually leave the training hall and I only saw him once last year. He is extremely skilled in kung fu and not many outsiders know that!"

"Why aren't their eldest senior brother and second senior brother here?"

"I don't know."

"It doesn't matter who comes today, it'll be useless!"

"With only about a dozen of them, they still have the guts to make an appearance?"

The people from the Chinese martial arts world were busily commenting as they pointed fingers at them, but when the last figure appeared, everyone reflexively withdrew their outstretched fingers and did not dare point anymore.

Because Rao Aimin had arrived!

Dressed in a very casual white training outfit and wearing a pair of normal-looking canvas shoes that could be bought for just 10 or 20 yuan, Rao Aimin appeared in front of everyone as she strutted in leisurely. It did not look like she was here to attend a [Hongmen Banquet](#), but rather like she was just going for a post-meal stroll on the streets.

"It's Rao Aimin!"

"Ah?"

"She is Rao Aimin?"

"One of the current five grandmasters of our martial arts world?"

"That's her?"

"This..."

"So she really is that beautiful, damn!"

"I thought the rumors were false!"

Rao Aimin's name could be heard everywhere in the Chinese martial arts world. Basically, no one would not have heard of her name since she was one of the five grandmasters left. Who would not know her? Whenever the martial arts community mentioned her name, they would talk about her in whispers, like it was some taboo topic. It wasn't too much to say that one's expression would change whenever her name was mentioned. However, there were only a few people present who had seen Rao Aimin in person before. The number of up-and-coming, rising stars of the Chinese martial arts world was nothing like in the past. As a grandmaster, Rao Aimin had disappeared for some years now, so even her fight with the two grandmasters that had shocked the Chinese martial arts world back then was not witnessed by many. The majority of those present were only seeing Rao Aimin in person for the first time.

Liu Yiquan was very excited. "This is the latest grandmaster?!"

Liu Yizhang could not hide his excitement either. "She has such an elegant aura!"

Li Quanneng nodded his head firmly. "This is my exact mental image of a female grandmaster! Beautiful and elegant! I can tell that she is extremely skilled at kung fu just by looking at her!"

Yan Hui, not far away, sighed in amazement. "This is the one and only female grandmaster of our era? And her kung fu is even at a higher level than Grandmaster Zhou Tianpeng's and Grandmaster Chen Xi's?"

"Aunt!" Chenchen hurriedly tried to run over to her.

However, she was pulled back by Zhang Ye. "Wait and see."

Chenchen was not having any of that. "Zhang Ye!"

Zhang Ye whispered, "We agreed that you would listen to me when we are outside!"

Chenchen did not resist any further.

The main reason that Zhang Ye did not allow Chenchen to go over was because he was afraid something would happen due to the absolutely unusual situation today. It would be dangerous to let Chenchen go to the Eight Trigrams School's side since there was

so much uncertainty right now. So rather than that, he might as well just keep quiet and observe. It still would not be too late to act after that. He could save the trouble of not getting Rao Aimin distracted if she had to protect Chenchen while fighting someone else. That would only burden her, so it was better not to let Chenchen go.

On the other side, many of the large sects were stunned!

A few people who had seen Rao Aimin or come across her before forced a smile. Looking at the astonished crowd around them, they only shook their heads slightly and said nothing.

"Senior Sister."

"Senior Sister."

"Eldest Senior Sister."

When she arrived, the disciples of the Eight Trigrams Palm opened up a path for her.

Rao Aimin who was right at the back of the group walked leisurely to the front.

In the ring, the martial arts performance was still going on. The injured disciples of the Kongtong Sect couldn't possibly stop their performance just because someone had arrived. They just carried on performing their boxing routine and put in much more effort

than before.

Rao Aimin looked up at those Kongtong Sect disciples who were swathed in bandages. Suddenly, she lowered her head as she reached into her pocket and felt around in it. Then she took out something from the pocket and threw it up into the ring.

Jingle jangle.

It was a one-yuan coin.

The Kongtong Sect disciples in the ring were stunned.

Numerous martial artists outside the ring were also stunned.

What?

What was the meaning of that?

Rao Aimin turned around and told her juniors, "Spare them some change, everyone. They're still performing in the streets even though they're this badly injured. It must hard on them." After she said that, she turned to the people in the ring. "Broken physically but firm in spirit, that's very good. I have high hopes for all of you. Will you guys be smashing any concrete blocks on your chests? Perform that, I love watching it."

The Kongtong Sect people nearly fainted from anger!

Smashing concrete blocks on the chest?

I'll smash your grandpa!

Why do you have to be so sarcastic?!

We're in this state already, so who the fuck could still have a concrete block smashed on them!

A deputy leader of the Kongtong Sect did not take this well. He quickly stood up and said, "Rao Aimin, you're targeting our Kongtong Sect the moment you arrive. What do you mean by this?"

Rao Aimin leered at him. "Are those people from the Kongtong Sect?"

The Kongtong Sect deputy leader said, "Yes, they are!"

Rao Aimin made a noise of acknowledgment and asked curiously, "When did the Kongtong Sect people start practicing square dances? Not bad. I was just wondering which professional square dancers they are to have sneaked into here. So they turned out to be Kongtong Sect's disciples!"

The deputy leader was getting frustrated and shouted, "Rao Aimin, don't push it too far!"

Rao Aimin looked at him and said, "That's what I'm doing. What are you going to do about it?" She looked at his teeth and remarked, "Oh, so you've replaced the front teeth I knocked out a few years ago? And they're even gold teeth? How rich!"

The Kongtong Sect deputy leader's face flushed then lost color. "You..."

The Iron Palm's Master Sun said angrily, "Now is the time for the martial arts performances put on by the large sects. As a grandmaster, you ought to be more respectful to martial arts, and respectful to—"

Rao Aimin interrupted him and pointed to the ring. "Do you call those limping moves a martial arts performance? I could watch a performance like that at any old folks' home."

Master Sun raged, "Are you picking a fight?"

Rao Aimin said, "Would you like to fight? Sure then, I'll fight you one hand tied behind my back!"

Master Sun was just quick with his mouth, so when he heard Rao Aimin say that, he immediately fell quiet. He was considered one of the top few fighters in the Chinese martial arts world. If not, he wouldn't be addressed as "master" wherever he went. But he knew the disparity between a master and grandmaster was vast as the distance between heaven and earth. Let alone Rao Aimin giving him a one-hand handicap, even if Rao Aimin fought without using

her hands, he would still be unable to beat her!

An eminent monk from the Shaolin Monastery asked, "Almsgiver Rao, do you intend to offend everyone from our martial arts world?"

Rao Aimin replied in a nonchalant tone, "I've already offended many people in the past, so there's no difference in offending another one or two sects. Do you have any opinions about that? If you do, why don't we spar to settle our differences?"

The eminent monk was rebutted by that. Of course he wouldn't spar with Rao Aimin. Some years ago, their previous abbot of the Shaolin Monastery could not even take twenty attacks from her. Him? He could not even hold her for three attacks!

The surrounding "martial artists" who were seeing this one and only female grandmaster of the Chinese martial arts world for the first time were quite startled. Their image of a martial arts grandmaster was instantly shattered!

"So this is Rao Aimin?"

"This is...a grandmaster?"

"Uh..."

"This..."

"Why is this grandmaster kinda..."

The brothers, Liu Yiquan and Liu Yizhang, wiped their sweat away.

Li Quanneng and He Badao looked each other in the eye.

Why was this female grandmaster totally different from what they had expected!

Only Zhang Ye and Chenchen heaved a sigh of relief.

Seeing this, Zhang Ye was no longer worried about her. Having not seen her in over six months, Old Rao was still behaving the same. She had not changed at all!

[Hongmen Banquet](#) - a term for a trap, derived from a historical event involving Liu Bang and Xiang Yu.

Chapter 926: Zhang Ye steps into battle!

At the Martial Arts Conference.

The Eight Trigrams School got seated in the outermost area that was reserved for them. Rao Aimin led her juniors over and immediately closed her eyes in a composed manner, as though she was already getting ready for the upcoming duel. The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples did not disturb her.

Everyone was well aware of the intention of today's gathering, therefore the focus right now was all on the Eight Trigrams School, with lot of people casting glances at them every now and again. Secondary to that, they were also very curious about the legendary grandmaster of the Chinese martial arts world that was Rao Aimin. The Zhou Family Style's disciples and masters were particularly staring at her more frostiness and hatred in their eyes. They did not intend to avoid giving death glares to the Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples. Some of the Zhou Family Style's masters were carrying old battle injuries which preceded yesterday's events and were clearly dealt to them by Rao Aimin—the Zhou Family Style's training halls and schools all over the country had been challenged and defeated by Rao Aimin in the past half a year!

The performances continued.

Next was the Wudang Sect's turn.

Followed by the Qingcheng Sect.

Followed by South Wudang.

Then the Xingyi Fist Sect.

Afterwards was a small sect called the Flying Door Sect.

And so on.

Finally, it was time for the finale performance by the Zhou Family Style School.

An hour later, the performances ended.

An organizer from the National Martial Arts Association walked into the fight ring and raised the microphone to his lips and said, "Thank you to all the various sects and schools for their wonderful displays. Next, we will officially begin the next segment, the free sparring rounds. As per previous years, the match will be decided by individual skill, but do remember not to take it overboard. The matches will be held in ten separate sections, and the challenger can nominate any opponent they wish to duel. But the person being challenged may choose to decline the challenge. All matches will be refereed by the professionals from the National Martial Arts Association."

It was finally time for the key segment!

When they heard that, everyone's spirits at the venue were jolted!

This segment had been a standard event in every year's conference. Most grudges and disputes between the martial schools, or personal grievances, were usually settled in this setting. With so many martial sects existing in the Chinese martial arts world, it was impossible that they would be wholly united. There were in fact countless disagreements between them. Naturally, they would need a setting to resolve those issues as the Chinese martial arts world did not allow any large-scale vicious battles to take place between the martial schools. After all, they lived in a governed society. Of course, there were also other reasons for taking part in the duels. For example, for the newcomers to the Chinese martial arts world who were aiming to shoot to fame, this stage was naturally the best way to do it. In addition, for those expert martial artists who believed in their own strength, this was the best place for them to make their name known!

Right as the announcement ended, someone stood up.

It was someone from South Wudang!

That middle-aged expert stood up and gave a fist and palm salute. "I am South Wudang's Liu Qing, and I would like to challenge the deputy leader of the Wudang Sect, He Yanqing. Would Deputy Leader He like to accept my challenge?"

The Wudang Sect's deputy leader sneered, "I've long since been waiting for you!"

That person from South Wudang swept an arm out. "Please!"

"Please!" The Wudang Sect's deputy leader entered the ring.

The grudge between the Wudang Sect and South Wudang was long-standing. At each annual Martial Arts Conference, they would always challenge each other, so no one was surprised.

In the audience, other people gradually began standing up as well.

"As the Qingcheng Sect's Li Xiaonian, I challenge the eminent monks of the Shaolin Monastery to be my opponent!"

"Who do you want to challenge?"

"Any one of them!"

"What big talk. Then let this old monk take you on!"

"Please!"

"Please don't be too hard on me!"

...

"I am the non-affiliate, Cao Liwei. Would you dare to take me on, Zhou Yunian?"

"Haha, why would I not dare?"

"Then bring it on!"

"Let's do this!"

"We must definitely decide on a victor today!"

...

"I'm just a newcomer of the non-affiliates, giving a challenge to any heroes here. Would anyone like to give me some pointers?"

"I'll do it!"

"Thank you for your guidance."

"You're welcome. I won't hold back."

"Sure!"

"Please!"

...

In the blink of an eye, nine of the ten sections divided for the matches were occupied. There was one section still empty. No one said anything for the time being.

A while later.

Someone finally said something.

Zhang Ye could sense someone in the crowd not far away glaring at him. He raised his eyes to look over and noticed a familiar figure.

It was the Zhou Family's Fourth Bro Zhou!

He saw Fourth Bro Zhou's provocative eyes staring at him. "Non-affiliate Chen Zhen, dare you exchange a couple blows with me?" After going back yesterday, Fourth Bro Zhou contemplated the sequence of events of last night. He knew clearly that he had only said about three sentences in the lead-up, but why did that end up with so many people getting involved in a brawl? It was clearly that non-affiliate named Chen Zhen who incited the situation. That mouth was so venomous that he could change something from black to white. After getting lectured by a senior of the Zhou Family, Fourth Bro Zhou's anger was all pent-up. As a result, he pointed straight at Chen Zhen who he deemed to be the leader of the non-affiliates and small sects for last night.

The small sects and non-affiliates were stunned at this.

Liu Yiquan's expression changed slightly as he quickly said, "Bro Chen, this Fourth Bro Zhou might not be the most skilled amongst this generation of the Zhou Family Style's disciples, but he's still an above average expert!"

Li Quanneng immediately added, "Be careful!"

He Badao also said worriedly, "Don't go if you can't do it!"

Everyone had seen Zhang Ye's martial arts skills yesterday and were not too optimistic about his chances.

But who could have expected that Zhang Ye would simply give a smile and say, "I've already been identified in person by name. It wouldn't make sense if I didn't go up then, right? Fourth Bro Zhou was such a bully last night, trying to scam us non-affiliates and the small sects. But after meeting with our resistance last night, he even has the cheek to come and challenge me today? Should I not stick my neck out? If I don't accept the challenge, wouldn't that make him even more arrogant in the future?! Wouldn't that be telling him that we're scared? I must fight him in this match today! Even if I cannot beat him, I will take him on and take a chunk out of him! I cannot sacrifice the dignity of the small sects and us non-affiliates! We cannot let the large sects think that we're easily pushed around!"

When the people around him heard that, they started cheering in support!

These words of Zhang Ye's whipped everyone up into a frenzy,

seemingly elevating his status even further!

"Well said!"

"Bro Chen! Nicely put!"

"Fuck, that's right!"

"Yeah, we aren't going to be pushed around easily!"

"For our dignity! Fuck!"

"Bro Chen, do well!"

"Go for it!"

"Fucking kill that Fourth Bro Zhou!"

"Fucking kill that shameless man!"

"Fucking kill the despicable villain that bullies the weak and fears the strong!"

"If you're so good, challenge me instead! Bullying a newcomer like Bro Chen doesn't make you better!"

"Fuck! Shameless!"

Listening to the shouting from over there, Fourth Bro Zhou nearly fainted from anger. Fuck your grandpas! What the hell did I say? All I did was ask if he dared to exchange a couple blows with me! What was all that about me being a shameless man coming out of nowhere? What was all that about me being a despicable villain about? Chen, you're too goddamn wicked! That mouth of yours is simply so venomous that it is leaking with pus! I will make sure that you leave on a stretcher today! Otherwise I won't be called Fourth Bro Zhou!

Fourth Bro Zhou was extremely angry!

The Zhou Family Style School's disciples were also supporting him in full force!

"Fourth Senior Bro, you can do it!"

"Get him!"

"That Chen Zhen is ridiculously infuriating!"

Fourth Bro Zhou and Zhang Ye both came forward and walked up into the fight ring. This wasn't some fighting platform that was set up with a wooden frame, but a demarcated area measuring 10 by 10 meters within the main fight ring.

The organizer's referee allowed the two of them into the area and

said, "To reiterate, don't take it overboard. We just need decide on a victor."

Fourth Bro Zhou nodded while nursing his hatred.

Zhang Ye said, "Understood."

The referee asked, "Do either of you need any weapons? If you do, you may choose something."

Fourth Bro Zhou looked at Zhang Ye and said, "I need one, how about you?"

Zhang Ye nonchalantly replied, "Then I'll use something too."

The referee pointed. "The weapons are over there."

The weapons on the rack were all blunted.

Fourth Bro Zhou had already chosen something as he went over to grab a sword. He gave it a few swings then switched to a different one that he was more satisfied with. He carried the sword back to the dueling area.

However, Zhang Ye did not head over to the weapons rack. Under the watchful eyes of the referee and everyone else, he looked around until he spotted something. With a glint in his eyes, he walked away to a spot over 20 meters away, to a corner of the

hilltop where he picked up a brick. Satisfied, he turned around and headed back to the fight area.

The referee was startled. "That will be your weapon?"

Zhang Ye nodded. "Yes."

The referee was dumbfounded. "Are you sure of your choice?"

"I am sure," Zhang Ye responded.

Fourth Bro Zhou's eyelids constantly twitched from anger. He felt extremely insulted.

But the small sects and non-affiliates did not seem bothered by this. They had already witnessed Bro Chen Zhen's brick techniques last night, so they knew his main mode of attack...kinda followed this approach.

"Go, Chen Zhan!"

"Go, Chen Zhen!"

"Bro Chen, you can do it!"

A lot of people were cheering on Zhang Ye!

Some of the other duels had already began and a lot of the others had their attention on the other nine areas. With the sudden cheering over on this side, all of their attention turned here. When they saw one of the participants holding a brick in the fight area, many of these martial artists' jaws dropped!

What sort of weapon is that?

My god, why is it a brick?

The Eight Trigrams School also looked over at this moment!

"Chen Zhen?" spoke one of the junior sisters.

Fifth Senior Sister Song Jiao said in astonishment, "That is Chen Zhen?"

Sixth Senior Brother Xu Fan was stunned. "Damn, he's really using a brick?"

The ninth disciple, Zhao Yunlong, was speechless.

One of the junior brothers exclaimed, "Is that really going to be his weapon?"

Song Jiao asked, "Junior Bro, is it him?"

Lu Yuhu was in a sort of daze. "I guess so."

"What's the matter?" Song Jiao wondered.

Lu Yuhu said with some suspiciousness, "It's nothing much, but I find that guy wearing the sunglasses kinda familiar. I might be wrong, though."

Rao Aimin still had her eyes closed and was not bothered by all these little distractions.

In the ring, the duel was about to begin.

The referee asked, "Are you both ready?"

Fourth Bro Zhou stared hard at Zhang Ye and said, "I'm ready!"

Zhang Ye said calmly, "I'm ready too."

"Alright then." The referee raised his hand, then swooped it down. "Begin!"

With that, the referee immediately retreated to the edge.

According to the rules of the Chinese martial arts world, Fourth Bro Zhou gripped the sword handle, blade down, and gave a fist and palm salute. "Fight hard!"

Opposite him, Zhang Ye returned with a slight fist and palm salute. "Fight hard."

But sometimes, it only took an instant to decide the outcome between winning and losing!

Right after they finished speaking, Fourth Bro Zhou flipped his sword upright. But before he could even grip it properly, he was shocked to discover that a reddish object was already flying at him!

It was a brick!

Zhang Ye had shamelessly given this attack a pompous name. He bellowed, "Take my Brick Descending from the Heavens!"

This attack was just a simple one, and Fourth Bro Zhou thought that he could dodge it. After all, when one had reached the level of an expert, their reaction speed and agility were at an elevated state. Let alone a brick, even if it were against a hidden weapons expert, in the readiness of a combat situation, Fourth Bro Zhou was still confident that he could dodge a throwing knife. But just as he was leaning aside to dodge the attack, he realized that he was wrong!

He could not dodge it at all!

The brick was approaching too quickly!

It was so fast that he thought he heard the whistling of the wind as the brick traveled at high speed and hit him right in the face. Fourth Bro Zhou could only avoid it to the point that the bridge of his nose would not get hit. He slightly turned his head but the brick still smashed hard into the left side of his face!

"Ah!" Fourth Bro Zhou screamed in pain. His left face was momentarily depressed inward and his entire body tilted as he fell down to the floor on his sides!

Many people were watching in shock!

This!

What kind of speed is that?

What kind of strength is that?

"You're using a hidden weapon!" Fourth Bro Zhou shouted angrily and started to rise to his feet to fight.

But before he could stand up, a shadow of a punch was already approaching his face!

Thump! It landed on Fourth Bro Zhou's face again!

The force was so great that Fourth Bro Zhou's entire person twisted as he was thrown to the ground. With a heavy crash, he

banged against the floor. Just listening to that sound alone showed how strong that punch was!

The bruised and swollen-faced Fourth Bro Zhou was knocked nearly unconscious!

With a brick and a single punch, he had already lost all of his fighting spirit!

Zhang Ye did not even use a single kung fu move and only depended on the basic physical qualities of his body! Chinese martial arts were just like that. It was nothing like in the novels or the movies, where fights of a thousand rounds happened without much of a fuss. That was basically impossible, since a hundred rounds already sounded close to impossible, and that was even speaking in the context of a duel between experts. Most dueling matches in the ring were basically decided after a few punches or kicks, so how could there be a fight lasting several hundred rounds?

The referee was stunned. Everything had happened so quickly that he only managed to react just now. He hurriedly rushed over and shouted, "Stop, stop fighting!" Then he looked at Fourth Bro Zhou lying on the floor before he announced, "The winner: Chen Zhen from the non-affiliates!"

The Zhou Family Style School's disciples were furious!

Meanwhile, those from the small sects and non-affiliates all raised their arms and started cheering!

"Great!"

"Great fight!"

"Good punching!"

"Good brick technique!"

"Old Bro Chen's brick technique has improved!"

"Kill that shameless man!"

"Beat up that despicable villain!"

"Hahaha, how enjoyable! Good fight!"

"The villain will definitely get what he deserves!"

Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, Liu Yiquan, and a few other people whom Zhang Ye had gotten close to were cheering the loudest!

Chenchen looked at Zhang Ye in disbelief, as though in disbelief at how Zhang Ye could have gotten so strong all of a sudden!

Amid everyone's cheers, Zhang Ye gave a fist and palm salute in

gratitude as he came out of the ring while laughing. "Thank you, thank you. I got lucky that the thieving bastard did not succeed!"

"Bro Chen, great showing!"

"That felt so good!"

"The thieving bastard will definitely lose!"

"Evil will never prevail against good!"

When Fourth Bro Zhou, who was lying on the floor, heard that, he almost vomited blood. He was so angry that he didn't know what he could say. Clearly, that Chen fellow had resorted to a sneak attack! He even shamelessly threw a hidden weapon to hit his face!

But as it stands?

Why am I the despicable one?

And shameless?

And I'm even called a thieving bastard now?

Fuck your grandma!

Do you people still have any shame!?

The Qingcheng Sect is situated in the Qingcheng Mountains where Kung Fu Panda 3 was based.

Chapter 927: Then I'll listen to you people!

Fourth Bro Zhou was carried out of the ring via stretcher.

Winners were crowned and losers vilified. That was how all matches ended in the Chinese martial arts world. Whoever was more skilled would have the last say. The loser didn't have any right to speak.

The duel ended just like that.

The tenth match was the last to begin but the first to finish.

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples nearly fainted when they saw this.

"So that is Chen Zhen?"

"Uh..."

"Isn't his strength a little too great?"

"Eleventh Bro, can your strength beat his?"

"Man, that's hard to say."

"Is that an external style he's using?"

"I don't know! He didn't even use any martial arts moves!"

"That's right. I couldn't even tell which martial school's moves those were!"

"Don't tell me that there's really a style called the Swimming Body Eight Trigrams Brick?"

"..."

Song Jiao, the fifth senior sister, evaluated, "Unless concealed power or some special type of kung fu was used, very few people in the entire Chinese martial arts world can compare to his strength. With normal training techniques, even if a person trains their entire life, their greatest strength would be no more than this!"

Lu Yuhu commented, "He's an expert."

Upon returning, Zhang Ye was surrounded by a group of people who gave him extremely good treatment.

"Bro Chen, I didn't know you had hidden talents!"

"Please don't say that."

"That brick smash was wonderful!"

"Thank you very much, thank you very much."

The Zhou Family Style School's Sect Leader Zhou Tianpeng did not look up at all. As for some of the older boxing specialists of the Zhou Family Style, their focus was not on these "brawls" between the juniors. At today's Martial Arts Conference, only Rao Aimin was their cause of concern. She was their most formidable enemy!

In the main ring, the duels gradually came to a close.

The duels with both parties using weapons ended slightly faster while the unarmed duels took longer.

In the match between both Wudangs, the Wudang Sect emerged victorious.

The Shaolin Monastery came out on top in the match against the Qingcheng Sect.

Victory was also decided among the non-affiliates.

Today's dark horse was a newcomer to the Chinese martial arts world. He had actually managed to defeat a rather well-known boxing specialist of the Chinese martial arts world. His win earned him some fame.

Of course, Zhang Ye gained some fame as well. Actually, this

fellow was famous since last night. Who from the large sects did not know about "Chen Zhen"? Basically everyone hated him to the bone!

Afterwards, someone else came forward to issue a challenge.

"Qian Dong, come and have a match with your grandpa!"

"Grandson, Grandpa is coming!"

"Who is Grandson calling?"

"I'm calling you grandson!"

"Whose grandson are you?"

"I'm your grandpa!"

The enmity between them clearly ran very deep. They cursed at each other as they walked up into the ring and even continued to curse at each other while dueling.

"Grandson, take that!"

"Receive this palm strike from your grandpa!"

"Grandson, watch out for my attack!"

"Your grandpa is watching out!"

"Haha, my grandson got punched!"

"Haha! Grandson, you're only helping your grandpa scratch his back!"

The referee didn't know whether to laugh or cry while watching this.

The National Martial Arts Association's people were also speechless. They felt somewhat embarrassed as the Chinese martial arts world was opening up, standardizing, and taking the high-end route in the market. But those martial artists' characters and educational qualifications were not in line with this market expansion. There were always some people who liked to scold others, or liked to fight with a brick, or liked to scold others and fight with a brick. They could not curb the behavior of such people, so could only turn a blind eye to it all.

After some of the others went into the ring to duel, an unexpected person came forward. He was the Huashan Sect leader, Grandmaster Chen Xi's junior brother—Fan Wen. He was the person whom Zhang Ye met with at the entrance of the holiday resort's restaurant last night. The compensation of a thousand yuan per person was "negotiated" by Zhang Ye and Fan Wen at the time.

The moment Fan Wen stepped forward, he called out, "Little Bro

Chen Zhen, it looks like you were born with superhuman strength and your martial arts are very good, so I was hoping to learn a little from you as well. Would you object to that?"

"Ah?"

"Steward Fan?"

"Steward Fan has issued a challenge too?"

"Senior Fan, take care of him!"

The large sects were getting excited. After watching the match between Zhang Ye and Fourth Bro Zhou, they were largely unsure if they would be a match for that Chen Zhen opponent, so they did not dare step forward to challenge him. Even the Zhou Family Style's disciples were staying silent. With the Huashan Sect's Senior Fan issuing a challenge, he could definitely beat that Chen Zhen.

However, the people from the small sects and non-affiliates were outraged.

"Isn't this bullying!"

"Senior Fan, how can you, as a senior, issue a challenge to a junior?"

"You're totally on a different level!"

"Despicable!"

Zhang Ye was tickled.

When Fan Wen heard that, he said, "Alright then, since I'm your senior and older than you, then how about this, I'll give you a one-hand handicap. We'll exchange some pointers since I would like to see for myself what Little Bro Chen's fighting, uh, brick style is like." The words "brick style" sounded very odd no matter how it was put.

Liu Yiquan shouted, "Bro Chen Zhen, don't go!"

Li Quanneng hurriedly said, "That old man is really formidable!"

"Yeah." He Badao said, "Fan Wen is an expert who is ranked in the top three of the Huashan Sect. He is also a prominent martial artist of the Chinese martial arts world! He's a master martial artist! You're not his match!"

Liu Yizhang tugged at him. "Bro Chen, be cautious. A wise man does not fight when the odds are against him!"

The other non-affiliates all said the same.

"Don't go!"

"Don't bother with him!"

"This is bullying!"

"They're obviously targeting you!"

"The Huashan Sect has always been in cahoots with the Zhou Family!"

"That's right! Don't go!"

After listening to all that, Zhang Ye gave a fist and palm salute to the surrounding people. "Thank you, everyone, for your kindness."

Everyone sighed when they heard this, as they knew their words had fallen on "Chen Zhen's" deaf ears. However, they were simply making a passing remark. At this sort of martial arts conference, there had never before been a precedent of anyone declining a challenge. That was because it was more embarrassing for a martial artist to refuse a challenge than to lose a match. Of the many duels each year, even if they clearly knew that they could not beat their opponent, they still braced themselves to face the challenge, all because there was no other way to it.

Zhang Ye walked out from the crowd as he said, "I feel very flattered that a Huashan Sect senior is challenging me. I would also like to see for myself what the Huashan Sect's martial arts are like!"

Fan Wen smiled and gestured with his hand, saying, "Little Bro Chen, as you please!"

Fan Wen walked toward the dueling area.

As Fan Wen's reputation was well-known, numerous people at the venue looked over. They were surprised that Fan Wen would actually spar with a junior. Hur hur, this Chen Zhen will surely have a hard time!

The non-affiliates were still trying to talk him out of it.

"Be careful!"

"Don't be rash, Bro Chen!"

"Be cautious! Be cautious around him!"

"Senior Fan is not easy to deal with!"

"Don't go!"

Zhang Ye waved them off and said righteously, "Everyone, please don't try to talk me out of this! I've already decided! Since the large sects want to use me as an example to warn others, I definitely can't avoid it today. It doesn't matter whether I advance or retreat. For the dignity of the small sects and us non-affiliates, what reason

do I have to back away from this challenge? I have to fight even if I die!"

Everyone was moved. They knew that Bro Chen Zhen was going to accept the challenge for sure!

"Bro Chen's heroism will reach the clouds!"

"Bro Chen is a heroic man!"

"Think carefully!"

"It's not embarrassing even if you don't go!"

Fan Wen was ready.

The referee had already gone up into the ring.

Zhang Ye suddenly looked around at the non-affiliates and flapped his hands, saying, "Don't talk me out of this. Everyone, please don't do that...why are you all still trying to talk me out of it? Hai! Whatever, I'll just listen to your advice then!"

Saying that, Zhang Ye turned around and walked back to his seat.

Everyone present was dumbfounded by what they saw!

Liu Yiquan fainted!

He Badao fainted!

Fan Wen fainted!

Everyone from the large and small sects nearly faceplanted!

Fuck, you really aren't gonna fight?

We were just being fucking polite with you, alright!?

Chapter 928: Is the legacy of the Taiji Fist actually lost?

With this episode, the venue's atmosphere became rather awkward! Although the saying went: "Listen to advice and you won't starve," weren't you still too easily talked out of it by us? Didn't you say that you would be fighting for the dignity of the small sects and non-affiliates? That you'd go into the fight even if you knew you would die? Weren't you not going to give in to the large sects' despotism? Your sister! Where exactly do your principles lie? Why did you choose to turn around just because others politely tried to talk you out of the challenge! You, you're totally going against the grain of martial arts routines!

Zhang Ye walked cool as a cucumber back to his seat. He did not consider this event to be of any importance.

Liu Yizhang wiped away his sweat and said, "Bro Chen, w-why did you come back?"

Contrary to expectations, Zhang Ye gave a look of astonishment and said, "Didn't you guys tell me to walk away from the fight?"

Liu Yizhang: "..."

Liu Yiquan: "..."

Li Quanneng: "..."

Yan Hui: "..."

We did try to talk you out of it!

But no one was expecting you to agree so readily!

But with Zhang Ye saying that, they could not find any other reasons to reply to him, because they had really shouted for him to walk away from the fight!

Whatever!

You win!

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples looked at one another.

Song Jiao said with exasperation, "That Chen Zhen, why does it seem like he's kinda shameless?"

Xu Fan was also dumbfounded. "It's not that he seems that way, but that he's actually kinda shameless!"

Zhao Yunlong said, "Take away the 'kinda.' He's just shameless!"

Lu Yuhu said in a speechless manner, "Why do I find that person so familiar?"

With the crowd there, they could not even see "Chen Zhen" clearly, much less spot a little girl like Chenchen.

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen, who was already ready to go in the dueling area, furrowed his brows in anger. "Chen Zhen, do you intend to duel me or not? What's the meaning of this?"

The large sects were angered too!

Especially the Huashan Sect's disciples, who felt that their martial sect's senior had gotten played, making all of them infuriated.

When Grandmaster Chen Xi heard the commotion over here, he also frowned and swept his gaze to Zhang Ye.

"Shameless!"

"Say so if you're afraid!"

"Hey Chen, I bet you're just afraid to fight!"

"You just can't beat our Martial Uncle Fan! Stop finding excuses!"

"If you're skilled enough, you should step forward!"

"Right, if you're skilled enough, come out and fight!"

"Chen Zhen, let me ask you a simple question: Do you have the courage to exchange blows with our Martial Uncle Fan?!"

"Our master has already said that he'd give you an advantage, but you're still afraid of taking on the challenge?"

"Come out!"

"Come out!"

"Come forward if you're so skilled!"

The Huashan Sect kept goading him from their side!

But Zhang Ye was unmoved. He was neither embarrassed nor nervous and was completely untroubled by them. Instead, he started chatting, a smile on his face, with Liu Yiquan who was seated beside him. "Look at how wonderful the fight over at section three of the dueling area is."

Liu Yiquan grunted, "Ah."

Zhang Ye asked, "Which martial sect is that person from?"

Liu Yiquan answered, "Uh, it looks like the Xingyi Fist."

Another Huashan Sect disciple called out, "Not brave enough to challenge my martial uncle? Chen Zhen, do you have the courage to challenge me instead, then?! This won't be considered bullying, right?"

"Second Senior Bro!"

"Go get him, Second Senior Bro!"

"Destroy him!"

"Right, destroy him!"

"That Chen Zhen is super infuriating!"

Yan Hui was afraid that he would be on the losing end, so reminded, "That is the Huashan Sect's second senior brother. He's one of the most outstanding disciples of this generation. Compared to the Zhou Family Style's Fourth Bro Zhou, he's way better than him, so you must be careful!"

But as it turned out, Zhang Ye was still chattering away with Liu Yiquan, as though he had heard nothing. He even conveniently turned around to Yan Hui to ask, "Eh, Bro Yan, what style of martial arts do you practice?"

Yan Hui: "..."

The surrounding people: "..."

The conversation went on until Liu Yiquan and Yan Hui could no longer keep a straight face, yet Zhang Ye was still as indifferent and calm as ever. This made Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and a number of the surrounding non-affiliates and small sect disciples feel extreme admiration for him! Bro Chen Zhen's skin is really goddamn thick! This was also a skill that most people did not have!

The Huashan Sect's disciples shouted until their voices turned hoarse!

Fan Wen was so angry that he just returned to his seat!

The Huashan Sect's second senior brother also looked extremely angry!

But Zhang Ye remained in his place. No matter how his opponents tried to draw him in, he did not step forward. Why would he want to duel? Earlier, in the match with Fourth Bro Zhou, Zhang Ye only did it because he had wanted to test his skills in a real fight. Moreover, after watching so many matches, he had gained a slight understanding of his personal power. He had also gained a deeper understanding of the entire Chinese martial arts world's standards and the division of ranks for the experts, so why would he still bother with dueling anyone? It wasn't like he was here to fight anyway! Oh, just because you guys shouted and tried to incite me, I must step forward to duel you guys? Do you think I'm an idiot? Do you know how much this bro is worth? This bro can command an appearance fee of over a million RMB just by appearing in an interview. Can you people pay me such a sum?

A fellow like Zhang Ye was not someone from the martial arts community anyway. All he knew was that he had to sneak into the enemy's camp today to make a mess of things. But as for the rules of the Chinese martial arts world, or whatever honor or dignity, he did not care for any of that! As a result, he would naturally feel that this wasn't something to be embarrassed about!

The large sects could watch no longer.

"Forget about him!"

"What kind of a hero is that!"

"He's a disgrace to our martial arts world!"

"He's even afraid of accepting a challenge?"

"How infuriating! I've never come across such a ruffian before!"

"Why did the National Martial Arts Conference invite someone like him to participate?"

"In so many conferences, there has never before been someone who didn't accept a challenge! He is the first!"

A lot of those from the large sects glared at Zhang Ye with contempt, looking very uncomfortable with being labeled together

with him as members of the Chinese martial arts world. All of them were indignant at Zhang Ye for the Huashan Sect!

The Huashan Sect leader, Chen Xi, spoke, "Quiet down, everyone."

With that, all the large sects and Huashan Sect's disciples did not utter another word. They looked up and realized that all the matches had ended and that there was no one else who came forward to issue a challenge to anyone!

Everyone was startled and knew that the main event was starting soon!

In the blink of an eye, the entire venue fell silent. They no longer cared about denouncing "Chen Zhen."

Chen Xi stood up. "Is there anyone else?"

No one answered.

Chen Xi asked again, "Let me ask again, is there anyone else?"

Still, there was no answer.

Only then did Chen Xi nod his head and signaled with his hand for the ten National Martial Arts Association's referees to get out of the ring and stand to the side. Then, quite a few National Martial

Arts Association's employees came into the ring to clear the area and put the weaponry back on their racks. A female employee picked up the brick that Zhang Ye had taken from somewhere and took a long, hesitating look around before she finally just threw it somewhere onto the ground.

The second round of events at the Martial Arts Conference ended.

Liu Yiquan looked up into the ring.

Zhang Ye raised his head.

Chenchen scowled.

The Zhou Family Style's disciples clenched their fists.

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples looked to the ring.

"It's beginning!"

"It's time for official business!"

"How do you think they will fight to settle their differences?"

"I don't know!"

"A battle of grandmasters, it'll be really wonderful to watch!"

"Yeah, it's a once-in-a-lifetime battle!"

"This year's National Martial Arts Conference certainly won't be like the ones before it. The events of today will be immortalized for future generations, and as witnesses to it, we truly should feel honored!"

"How exciting!"

"Let's see how this feud will be settled!"

"Supporting the Zhou Family! Grandmaster Rao has definitely crossed the line this time. She is openly provoking our martial arts world by upsetting the norms. The National Martial Arts Association definitely won't let this go!"

Amid everyone's gaze, the incumbent leader of the Zhou Family Style School, Zhou Tianpeng, finally opened his eyes. His eyes were clear, as though he had been preparing a long time for this moment. It felt like a sharp sword suddenly being unsheathed. He stood up and strode toward the fight ring, then suddenly kicked off the ground and launched himself into the air before landing in the ring that was around 1.4 meters tall. He did this without any effort at all, but landed inside the wooden ring with a loud crash and violently shook it. The dust particles swirled up against the glow of the sun upon impact!

"Great kung fu!"

"Beautiful!"

"Grandmaster Zhou's skills have advanced greatly!"

"He's indeed worthy of the title of grandmaster!"

For most jump and land moves, this wouldn't seem unusual in the eyes of a real expert. As they say, "Laypersons watch the buzz, while professionals examine the skill." But at this moment, the Huashan Sect's Fan Wen was a little astonished. In his opinion, compared to the Grandmaster Zhou he had seen a few years back, even though Zhou Tianpeng had aged by a little, his martial arts skills did not seem to have regressed one bit. In fact, it even looked like he had improved. Reaching the level of grandmaster was the pinnacle of Chinese martial arts. But there was also a division of strength among the grandmasters. For example, their Huashan Sect leader, Chen Xi—who was also Fan Wen's senior brother—would be considered the weakest of the five grandmasters when it came down to their martial arts skills. Meanwhile, Rao Aimin was the strongest of the five. Several years ago, Zhou Tianpeng was supposedly at the level between them, a little stronger than his senior brother but a little weaker than Rao Aimin. However, that was a comparison from those days. Today, it was more difficult to determine who was the strongest of the grandmasters. Besides, how could people like him judge the martial arts of these grandmasters? There was no way he could assess their skills at his level. He could only get a general feel of how it might be!

For instance, the way that Grandmaster Zhou Tianpeng made his

appearance today clearly gave many people the feeling that his martial arts were much better than a few years back.

It was probably the same for Chen Xi since internal style martial artists usually improved over time.

The only unknown was whether Rao Aimin's skills had regressed during this time. In the past few years, no one had seen Rao Aimin, nor knew where she had gone, nor what she had done. In the past six months of challenging the Zhou Family Style School's training halls, it was comparable to using a cannon to kill mosquitoes. The Zhou Family Style's disciples were obviously not worthy of Rao Aimin to exercise her efforts on and stood basically no chance against her. Therefore, Rao Aimin's current martial arts skills were still a mystery to everyone, including to the two grandmasters Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi!

The venue was enveloped in silence!

Zhou Tianpeng was in the ring. His expression this time was no longer the same as when he had stood there earlier. The aura he gave off was utterly different from before. This time, he did not even hold a microphone and just projected his voice to speak. Even so, every word that he spoke was loud and crisp. No matter where someone sat, they could still hear him very clearly!

Zhou Tianpeng said, "Dear friends and colleagues of our national martial arts world, the previous events have all come to an end. It is a little shameful to say this, but the next event has to do with me settling a personal feud with a certain someone!"

"There's nothing to be shameful about!"

"Grandmaster Zhou, just announce it!"

"Right, everyone is here as your witness!"

The Kongtong Sect, the Huashan Sect, the Iron Palm Sect, and all the other martial sects were very supportive!

Zhou Tianpeng nodded and said, "Alright, then I shall first give my thanks to everyone present. I am sure that everyone has already heard something about the cause of this issue. As a grandmaster, Rao Aimin has gone around abusing her powers against my juniors, bullying my Zhou Family Style's disciples, and tearing down my training halls. This has brought about great losses to the Zhou Family! Ignoring economic losses, which are secondary, it has hurt our Zhou Family Style's reputation. That is something I won't tolerate!"

Numerous shouts suddenly rang out from the audience.

The Huashan Sect: "Supporting Old Master Zhou!"

The Kongtong Sect: "Supporting Grandmaster Zhou!"

The Kunlun Sect: "Supporting Vice President Zhou!"

"Intolerable! No need to keep tolerating!"

"The Eight Trigrams School has gone too far!"

"Grandmaster Zhou is big-hearted and did not argue with you people in the past, yet you people still don't know where to draw the line? Going around the entire country to bring down the Zhou Family Style's training halls? If this can be tolerated, then what would be intolerable?!"

"This is too despicable!"

Many of those from the large sects were looking angrily in the direction of the Eight Trigrams School.

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were irritated by this.

Lu Yuhu shouted, "Have you people forgotten about the blood debt of my Senior Sister's little sister and brother-in-law?"

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen said bluntly, "That was just a very normal match in which they willingly put their lives on the line."

Song Jiao said furiously, "Quit your fucking bullshitting! Old Crook Zhou's son has committed so many evil deeds and used martial arts to bully others. Our Senior Sister's little sister had only agreed to a deathmatch with him to settle their feud. But when Old Crook Zhou saw that his son was about to meet his end, he interfered in the match to save him, dealing some injuries to my

Senior Sister's little sister and brother-in-law. Let me ask you then, who were the ones bullying the weak there? Let me ask you again, who did not follow the rules of our martial arts world? How are you going to repay this debt?"

The Huashan Sect's Second Senior Bro harrumphed. "And who witnessed that?"

A deputy leader of the Kongtong Sect scoffed, "Ridiculous. That's complete nonsense!"

The Kunlun Sect leader said, "Grandmaster Zhou is a big-hearted man, how could he possibly do something like that? What you heard were just rumors within the martial arts community and should not be taken seriously. Even if Grandmaster Zhou had hurt those two, it must have been during a normal match. They died a year later, so how can you place the blame on Grandmaster Zhou for their deaths?"

Zhao Yunlong said angrily, "Sect Leader of Kunlun, don't you dare pretend like you don't know a thing! Don't you know what concealed power is? When one gets struck by concealed power, their insides suffer irreparable damage!"

Master Sun, from an Iron Palm branch, repeatedly shook his head. "Where's the proof? The evidence? You keep addressing him as Old Crook Zhou. Do you have any manners?"

Actually, no one could relate the event that happened many years ago too clearly and there were all sorts of rumors flying around.

But whatever the truth, one could easily guess what had really happened. All they knew was that Zhou Tianpeng's son was indeed not a good person and Zhou Tianpeng had also fought with Rao Aimin's sister and brother-in-law. As for the details, nobody really knew about them.

The Eight Trigrams School's people started arguing with the large sects!

The small sects and non-affiliates did not say anything and only whispered among themselves.

"Grandmaster Zhou's son was indeed..."

"Oh, I know. You don't need to mention that."

"My opinion about this is pretty close to the Eight Trigrams School's version of events."

"I heard that there were witnesses to the incident, but no one said anything about it afterwards."

"Shhh, be quiet. Don't let anyone hear you."

"We can only speculate among ourselves, but that person is still a grandmaster after all."

"Why do the large sects seem so united?"

"Who knows if they'd already discussed their stand before this!"

"Let's just watch how it turns out. Don't talk anymore."

"Yeah, it's not something that we can really do anything about either."

"It's a fight between gods!"

At the other end, the two sides were still arguing!

The large sects shouted, "Rao Aimin is a tumor within our martial arts world!"

The Eight Trigrams School shouted back, "Old Crook Zhou is despicable and shameless!"

"Bullying and injuring so many of the Zhou Family Style's disciples, who is the shameless one here? If you're so good, you should have brought this up to Grandmaster Zhou directly. Why did you have to injure so many of the Zhou Family Style's disciples?"

"Our Eldest Senior Sis has issued countless challenges to Zhou Tianpeng in the past half a year, but he dared not answer to her challenges due to his guilt! He did not even dare to step out of his hole. How else can she bring it up to him then? All those years ago,

when Zhou Tianpeng injured our Senior Sister's little sister and brother-in-law, she went to confront the Zhou Family about it. When Zhou Tianpeng realized that the situation was not to his advantage, he even teamed up with the Huashan Sect leader to take her on and defeated her. So how can you still have the cheek to say that?"

"That's because Rao Aimin had nothing better to do. Her sister and brother-in-law's business had nothing to do with Grandmaster Zhou at all, yet she came looking for trouble. That in and of itself was already her fault for coming to confront others with no good reason, so who cares if the grandmasters teamed up? If a thief breaks into your house, you're not even allowed to retaliate?"

"Bullshit!"

The Zhou Family Style School's disciples cut in, "That incident from all those years ago was due to her sister and brother-in-law being less skilled, yet they still agreed to the deathmatch. Since they were responsible for their own lives, what else is there left to argue about!"

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were so angry that they were trembling!

The large sects had the numerical advantage. With every one of them just saying something, it was more than enough to drown them out, and even the guilty could be presented as innocent. Moreover, judging from their unity, it seemed like those from the large sects had already discussed this prior to the conference!

Over there.

Chenchen was also trembling!

The large sects and the Zhou Family Style's disciples were speaking about Chenchen's dead parents without a care in the world, and some people even spoke with acrimony of them. There was also someone from the Zhou Family Style who said that they "deserved it for losing"!

Zhang Ye's face sank when he heard that. He clutched Chenchen's little hand, but found that it was ice-cold as she clenched her fist tightly.

Suddenly, the Huashan Sect leader stepped forward.

Grandmaster Chen Xi walked up into the ring and looked down, speaking loudly, "Let me say a few words!"

Only then did the large sects put down their hands, which they had been pointing at the Eight Trigrams School. They looked over and waited for this other grandmaster to speak. Chen Xi was representing the National Martial Arts Association as the organizer and also was in charge of this event today!

They heard Chen Xi say, "Today's National Martial Arts Conference was called in advance, mainly because we wanted to settle this issue between the Zhou Family and Rao Aimin. As a

bystander, I largely understand the entire situation. Right now, I would like to talk about the following with everyone. Has anyone here heard of the Taiji Fist from over a hundred years ago?"

The Taiji Fist?

Zhang Ye narrowed his eyes.

The people below the ring were taken aback.

"I've heard of it!"

"Of course I've heard about it!"

"I heard my master talk about it once before!"

"Yeah. That's a very famous internal style!"

"A pity that it's already been lost for over a hundred years!"

Chen Xi looked at everyone and narrated, "There are still some historical records about the time when the Taiji Fist first appeared during the Qing dynasty. It pushed internal styles to a pinnacle at that time. Some of the large sects might not be strangers to this name, as a lot of masters and veterans from that time have passed down many legends and stories regarding the Taiji Fist by word of mouth. However, it was exactly this internal style, which had such a colorful history, whose legacy was lost over a hundred years ago.

This intangible cultural asset of our martial arts world did not get passed down and it is a heartache both for me and for our martial arts world!"

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen sighed, "Hai, what a pity!"

The Kunlun Sect's deputy leader also gave a light sigh. "How brilliant would the grandmaster of Taiji be at that time? But to this day, this martial arts style did not even get passed down to our time!"

Liu Yiquan said excitedly, "They're talking about Taiji Fist!"

Li Quanneng could only sigh, "I've heard of it too. It's such a pity!"

Zhang Ye gave both of them a look but did not say anything.

When the Taiji Fist was mentioned, the Zhou Family Style's disciples also had looks of yearning on their faces!

When an ordinary person hears about Taiji, they might not think of it as a fighting style. Many people did not even know what the Taiji Fist was. But within the Chinese martial arts world, everyone had long heard about the Taiji Fist. Some of the real experts and veterans in the martial sects all knew about the legend and brilliance of the Taiji Fist from all those years ago, and knew just how powerful this style of martial arts was. There had been many people who had tried to recreate the Taiji Fist from the written

records and oral accounts of those who had witnessed it before, and if they could even recreate 10 to 20% of it, it would have been good enough. However, no one had been able to do it so far, because this was not a martial arts form that followed a strict form. It wasn't like practicing sets that one would for external styles but an internal style martial arts that focused on the application of force, breathing techniques, and the flow of qi, which were all practiced differently from external styles. There was basically no way to recreate it to its original form by simply using bits and pieces of unconfirmed records. Therefore, many people gave up on doing so anymore and the Taiji Fist was just used as an example of a legendary martial arts style in the Chinese martial arts world to be passed down generation by generation. The martial arts community could only hear about the brilliance of the Taiji Fist but were regrettably unable to witness the rebirth of this style of martial arts!

Zhou Tianpeng also revealed a slight tinge of regret. "Hai."

Chen Xi continued, "The times now are different. Our martial arts world has entered a new chapter in its history. We have our own new set of rules and regulations, and the National Martial Arts Association will not tolerate those who break them. A feud between martial sects? Bullying others with martial arts? These are both prohibited activities within our martial arts world! We cannot allow the tragedy of the Taiji Fist to happen again and let those martial arts styles, which have existed for hundreds of years, slip out of our hands! Otherwise, we will be sinners to our national martial arts world. We will be sinners to our nation!"

This speech stoked the anger of many people!

"Right!"

"Grandmaster Chen has put it very well!"

"We have to protect our martial arts heritage!"

"This is the legacy of our nation!"

"The Taiji Fist has already been lost. We cannot allow the Zhou Family Style to disappear as well!"

"By doing what Rao Aimin did, she is basically trying to force the extermination of their school!"

"Compared to the injuries suffered by those Zhou Family Style's disciples, the protection of our Chinese martial arts legacy is much more important! Rao Aimin is trying to end all these decades of the Zhou Family Style's legacy! This is even more vicious than ending one's family line!"

"This is too much!"

"Intolerable!"

"We must definitely punish such behavior!"

"Denounce Rao Aimin!"

"Drive Rao Aimin out of our martial arts world!"

"We can't let her continue acting arrogant like that!"

"Right, we cannot allow the Zhou Family Style to become the second Taiji Fist!"

"Everyone, let's stand together! Strip Rao Aimin of her martial arts!"

"Destroy Rao Aimin!"

Everyone was freely expressing their anger!

Besides the Zhou Family, many of those from the large sects followed along and shouted!

In the end, even those small sects who had much to gain from the subsidy that Zhou Tianpeng was offering, and a small group of non-affiliates, had unknowingly followed along and started shouting when they heard that!

"Protect our martial arts heritage!"

"Supporting Grandmaster Zhou!"

"Drive Rao Aimin out of our martial arts world!"

"The martial arts community has no place for such a grandmaster!"

"Right, our martial arts world does not need a grandmaster like that. Everyone, let's stand united in denouncing Treacherous Rao!"

"Denounce Treacherous Rao!"

Chapter 929: Deathmatch! Zhang Ye makes his appearance!

The atmosphere was highly imposing!

Almost everyone was standing against Rao Aimin!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen stepped forward and said, "We of the Huashan Sect hereby proclaim our support for Grandmaster Zhou to seek an answer for the injustice he has suffered!" Although Sect Leader Chen Xi did not say anything, his words earlier had clearly expressed his attitude. Including the two versus one match between the grandmasters those years ago, it was quite evident whose side Grandmaster Chen Xi and the entire Huashan Sect were on. Moreover, Chen Xi and Zhou Tianpeng were friends of many years.

The Kunlun Sect leader stepped up and said, "The Kunlun Sect also expresses our support for Grandmaster Zhou!"

The Iron Palm's Master Sun came forward as well. "I also express, on behalf of our sect, that all the Iron Palm's disciples present today will give our support to Grandmaster Zhou! Any who dare to break the rules are antagonizing our sect!"

The Kongtong Sect deputy leader also came forward. "The Kongtong Sect will also be supporting Grandmaster Zhou!"

"And us, the Maoshan Sect!" an old Taoist with a white beard

shouted as he walked forward slowly.

"And us, South Wudang!"

"Us too, the Xingyi Fist!"

"There's also us from the Splitting Mountain Sect!"

"And us, the Zhao Family Style!"

"Count the Qingcheng Sect in as well!"

"Don't forget about us from the Shaolin Monastery!"

Even the eminent monks of the Shaolin Monastery were taking sides in this feud!

Zhang Ye looked at those people and observed them one by one. His eyes got narrower and narrower as he took in all their faces. Those who understood Zhang Ye would know that he was angry now!

Up to now, all of the large sects had shown their support for the Zhou Family and some of the martial sects even warned that if anyone dared to prevent this denouncement of Rao Aimin, it would mean that they would become their sworn enemies! Some of the small sects like the Splitting Mountain Sect also joined their side and stood together with the camp led by Zhou Tianpeng! A lot

of the other small sects and basically all of the non-affiliates did not express their opinions and just stood on the sideline. They stayed neutral as they felt they couldn't afford to offend either party. The martial sects or training halls they represented were also wholly unqualified to take part in the affairs of this incident to begin with. On the other hand, there was no one who expressed any support for Rao Aimin, not a single person. There were only a solitary dozen or so disciples of the Eight Trigrams School standing there with her!

Several hundred against a dozen or so?

It was an overwhelming numerical advantage!

Liu Yiquan sighed and said, "Grandmaster Rao is in trouble this time."

"This was indeed a Hongmen Banquet!" Yan Hui remarked.

Li Quanneng said, "She has made an enemy out of the entire martial arts community!"

He Badao said, "Looks like Senior Rao will find it hard to get away today!"

In the ring, Zhou Tianpeng gave a fist and palm salute to his supporters. "I, Zhou Tianpeng, give thanks to every one of you!"

"Grandmaster Zhou, you're being too polite!"

"It's only right!"

"Denouncing that Treacherous Rao is everyone's responsibility!"

"That Rao Aimin intends to exterminate your entire Zhou Family this time. Who knows if she might do that next to our Iron Palm Sect!"

"Right, this is a matter that concerns all of the martial arts community, so you don't have to thank us for anything!"

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were furious!

Lu Yuhu said angrily, "If you want a fight, just fight! What's with all that pompous reasoning!"

Song Jiao rebuked, "All you sanctimonious people! Do you people really think you're from some righteous sects? Ptui! You're all just shit!"

Zhao Yunlong let out a furious laugh. "What has the loss of the Taiji Fist's legacy for the past over a hundred years got anything to do with your Zhou Family? You're even comparing yourselves to the Taiji Fist? Do you people think you're qualified to be held in such regard?"

Suddenly, Rao Aimin opened her eyes.

"Senior Sis!"

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

"They're really pushing it too far!"

"Those hypocritical villains!"

Rao Aimin motioned with her hands for them to be quiet. She then looked up at Zhou Tianpeng. "Are you finished with your nonsensical talk?" Then she turned to Chen Xi. "Are you also finished with your nonsensical talk? Are we fighting?"

Chen Xi's expression sank a little!

Zhou Tianpeng looked at her. "Of course we'll be fighting today!"

Rao Aimin said impatiently, "Then quit your bullshitting."

Probably only a person like Rao Aimin, who was feared by everyone in the Chinese martial arts world, dared to speak in this manner to the two grandmasters, Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi!

Zhou Tianpeng looked at her indifferently and said, "You were the one who issued the challenge, so the rules of the duel will naturally be decided by me. That fine?"

Rao Aimin asked, "What do you propose?"

Zhou Tianpeng's next words astonished everyone. He said, "I propose a deathmatch!"

Everyone at the venue jumped in fright!

"What?"

"A deathmatch?"

"Ah?"

"This...this..."

"A deathmatch between the grandmasters?"

The deathmatch was a practice that had been passed down over many hundreds of years. Even after society had entered an age governed by law, the Chinese martial arts world still engaged in this tradition. But unless it was some great enmity, almost no one would choose to settle things in such a manner, especially when it concerned a feud between two grandmasters. This was a huge event that had never happened before!

Everyone was so shocked their eyeballs nearly popped out!

However, Rao Aimin's response to this astonished them even more!

Rao Aimin did not even hesitate and just said, "Sure!"

Instantly, Zhou Tianpeng was putting forward the rules of the match. "There are a lot of you from the Eight Trigrams School today, so don't say that we're bullying you with our numbers. For this deathmatch, let's send out three people from each side. We shall duel together in the same ring!"

Everyone was stunned!

Zhang Ye's expression changed!

Three people representing each side? A duel involving six people?

What kind of rule was this? Wasn't it supposed to be a one-on-one match? Wasn't this battle supposed to be between the Zhou Family Style's leader and Rao Aimin? Three people? Which three people?

At the next moment, the faces of all those Eight Trigrams Palm people wholly changed!

Because Chen Xi had taken a step forward and stood quietly next

to Zhou Tianpeng!

Chen Xi was going to take part in the battle?

Fuck your grandpa!

"Despicable!"

"Bastard!"

"Aren't you people playing dirty this way?"

"Two grandmasters against our Senior Sis by herself?"

"Shameless!"

"Fuck!"

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were raging!

The non-affiliates outside the ring were also stunned. H-How could they do this? The Eight Trigrams School was right! This really was somewhat of a shameless proposition!

Seeing quite a few of the conference participants stirring, Chen Xi could not help but explain, "Today is a one-off situation. Everyone here should know about Rao Aimin's martial arts. If Old

Zhou or I were to take her on alone, we certainly aren't going to a match for her. Yet, we cannot just watch helplessly as she continues rampaging and bullying others. Her actions are threatening to end the legacy of the Zhou Family Style, so we have to go to such lengths today. This is very unbecoming of the title of grandmaster, but there are some things that must be done. After much hesitation, we decided that this would be for the greater good. After today, I will voluntarily resign as the vice president of the National Martial Arts Association!"

Zhou Tianpeng frowned. "Bro Chen, you're doing this because of our Zhou Family Style's problems. If anyone resigns, it should be me!"

Chen Xi gave a wave of his hand. "Don't say anymore, Old Zhou. I've already decided!" Then he turned to the Eight Trigrams School and said, "We won't be filling all three places for the duel. It'll be just me and Old Zhou representing our side!"

Below, some of the large sects were shouting.

"Grandmaster Chen, you don't have to do what you said!"

"Right, why do you have to resign?"

"You're suffering this humiliation on behalf of our martial arts world!"

"That's right! Treacherous Rao's kung fu is more advanced! It's

not embarrassing even if it takes two grandmasters to take her on! You're dishing out justice on behalf of the heavens, so of course you have to ensure that it gets served! It was Rao Aimin who issued the challenge first, and our martial arts world has its rules as well. The rules of the duel have always been set by those who get challenged, so there's nothing wrong with that at all! Besides, only the two of you are participating. That's already considered as giving them some leeway!"

"Yeah, Grandmaster Chen, Grandmaster Zhou, the two of you are the real heroes here!"

"You'd rather bear the infamy of teaming up than letting that treacherous bitch get away! That's something that requires a lot of courage and strength to do! You're both truly worthy of being the grandmasters of our time!"

Many from the large sects were cheering them on for their actions!

Some of the Zhou Family Style's disciples were even holding back their tears as though they were suffering great heartache for the tremendous stress their sect leader was going through!

Liu Yiquan: "..."

Liu Yizhang gave a look to his brother. "Uh..."

Zhang Ye was exasperated!

He was truly exasperated!

Rao Aimin was showing the exact same expression as Zhang Ye. "Looks like I did not guess wrong. You've been holed up outside for the past half a year and not daring to go anywhere, and when you finally accepted my challenge all of a sudden, you clearly did not dare to take me on by yourself."

Chen Xi sighed. "Just choose your representatives!"

Lu Yuhu roared with rage, "Choose? Choose, my ass!"

Xu Fan exploded in anger, "How are we going to fight this way?"

Song Jiao said anxiously, "Eldest Senior Sis, let's leave!"

When she said that, a number of the Huashan Sect and Zhou Family Style's disciples reacted the quickest. They blocked off the only pathway to get down the hill and said, "If you're not fighting, don't even think of leaving this place today!"

"Right!"

"Denounce Treacherous Rao!"

"Otherwise, we won't let this rest!"

"The challenge was proposed by your side! But you people are thinking of running away now?"

The path was blocked off!

The Eight Trigrams School was now a target for everyone!

But Rao Aimin did not seem to mind. She narrowed her eyes as she looked at Chen Xi and Zhou Tianpeng, then with a tap of her toe, she also jumped up into the ring. "Alright, let me take on the two of you and practice some today!"

"Auntie!" Chenchen, in the crowd, rushed to her.

Zhang Ye pulled her back right away!

Chenchen cried, "My aunt won't be able to win if the two of them team up!"

Zhang Ye muttered in a low and serious voice, "I know that."

Not only did he know this, the Eight Trigrams School's disciples knew it as well, as did everyone from the Chinese martial arts world who were present at the conference. No matter how skilled Rao Aimin was, she would still find it difficult to take on two people at once. It would be exactly like the time she took on Chen Xi and Zhou Tianpeng several years ago. She would at most be able

to injure one of her opponents, but at high risk of getting injured herself. There was no chance she would emerge as the winner. Further, Zhou Tianpeng's skills had improved again and Chen Xi was also not at the same level as he was before. No one knew about Rao Aimin's kung fu, but even if she had improved as well, the circumstances were still the same. She couldn't possibly beat two grandmasters. This was a feat that was impossible!

Nominate three people for the battle?

Lu Yuhu rolled up his sleeves in anger. "I will go and hold one of them off!"

"Get back here!" Song Jiao stopped him. "Your kung fu is the weakest of everyone here! Like you would be able to hold them off! If we must go, it will be me and Sixth Junior Bro!"

Xu Fan immediately stood up. "I'm ready!"

"Don't be rash!" An older disciple of the Eight Trigrams Palm said, "The opponents are both grandmasters! What can you two do even if you take them on? Hold them off? How many attacks can you hold them off for? A single blow? Or two? Perhaps three? Among us, our Fifth Senior Sis and Sixth Senior Bro have the best skills and even they can't even hold them past three attacks! It'll only drag down Eldest Senior Sis if you guys fight! She'll get distracted by wanting to protect you guys! Don't forget, this is a deathmatch we're talking about!"

Lu Yuhu cursed in frustration, "Dammit!"

Zhao Yunlong said anxiously, "Then what should we do? What should we do?"

Xu Fan clenched his fist in indignation and said, "If Eldest and Second Senior Bro were here, that would've been great! With the two of them taking on a grandmaster, they could at least hold them off for more than ten attacks!"

"What's the point of delaying them for ten attacks!"

"Eldest Senior Sis is more skilled Old Crook Zhou, but only by a little. They certainly couldn't settle their differences within ten attacks. At the very least, Chen Xi has to be held off for 30 attacks! Even with Eldest and Second Senior Bro, we wouldn't be able to do that! This, this is a doomed match! It was totally targeted at Eldest Senior Sis! They want to make sure that Eldest Senior Sis will lose this match! There was no intention of letting her leave this place at all!"

"Bastard!"

"Let's take them on!"

"Take them on with what? They have several hundred people on their side!"

"Then what can we do?"

"Senior Sis! You should leave!"

"Right, with your skills, no one can stop you! Don't bother with us!"

However, Rao Aimin stayed motionless and just stared straight at Zhou Tianpeng!

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were getting worried and really had no way to deal with this. The entire Chinese martial arts world was now standing against them. No one was willing to support them!

Zhou Tianpeng looked in the direction of the Eight Trigrams School and said, "Nominate your people!"

Nominate what people?

How could they possibly nominate anyone!

It was useless whoever they nominated!

To everyone at the venue, it was clear that this was a deathmatch of two grandmasters against one grandmaster. No one else would be allowed to interfere because no one could! Even all the martial arts experts in attendance, like the Iron Palm's Master Sun or the Kunlun Sect's Taoist Han, none of them could possibly hold off a grandmaster for more than ten attacks, let alone this new generation of Eight Trigrams Palm disciples! It wasn't like there

were no skilled experts who could take on a grandmaster. For instance, that eminent monk of the Shaolin Monastery who had long since gone into seclusion, and that highly elusive non-affiliate Taoist. There were still quite a few of these hermits of the Chinese martial arts world who could probably fight a grandmaster and hold them off for many attacks. Unquestionably, none of those who could do it were in attendance of the conference today. But even if they were, they would not likely stand with Rao Aimin!

Therefore, the outcome of the match was already decided!

To say that they wanted to kill Rao Aimin today was probably a little over the top, but her keeping her skills was definitely something they wouldn't allow. No one could or would help her!

However, there was someone who refused to let this to happen!

While the Eight Trigrams School's disciples were anxiously circling around, a voice suddenly boomed, "Is this how the righteous martial sects and schools behave? Ha, today is such an eye-opener for me. Zhou Tianpeng bullied others and caused the loss of two lives, then explained that it was just a normal duel and how everyone was responsible for their own fates. But when someone else came to challenge your Zhou Family Style without even taking any human lives, and just injured a few disciples, it became a matter of treason and heresy? An outrage? The National Martial Arts Association has to step in to denounce people? And it's even two versus one? You want to take her life too? Strip her of her martial arts? Fuck you people! What bullshit is this?!"

He Badao said in shock, "Bro Chen!"

Liu Yiquan was also stunned. "Bro Chen Zhen!"

None of them expected "Chen Zhen" to actually say something at this point in time!

"Bro Chen, you..." Yan Hui was also dumbfounded. At this moment, the entire Chinese martial arts world is denouncing Rao Aimin, so what are you trying to do here?

"Bro Yan." Zhang Ye pulled Chenchen over and handed her to him. In the group, Zhang Ye trusted Yan Hui the most. Although Yan Hui did not recognize him, Zhang Ye definitely had not forgotten him. On the airplane, they had gone through life and death together, so he knew what Yan Hui's character was like. "Help me take care of the kid."

Yan Hui was taken aback. "What do you intend to do?"

A number of non-affiliates around them were also dumbfounded!

"Bro Chen Zhen!"

"Bro Chen, you..."

Everyone was looking at him!

Amid everyone's dumbfounded gazes, Zhang Ye strode out from

the crowd and unfastened the buttons of his down jacket. With a cold expression, he tore it away and flung it behind him!

With those words, he had shocked the whole venue!

Zhang Ye called out, "Nominate three people? There's no need for that! Just the two of us will be enough!"

With a lift of his leg, Zhang Ye went up into the ring!

Chapter 930: Rao Aimin's old flame?

At the Martial Arts Conference's venue.

Everyone present at the ring was stunned!

This martial arts conference was clearly organized as an effort by the large sects to denounce Rao Aimin. It was clearly an assault of several hundred people against her. It was clearly a situation in which the outcome was fixed after the two grandmasters joined hands for the battle. To say nothing of Rao Aimin, even the Eight Trigrams School's disciples would find it difficult to return home safely. It didn't matter who stepped up; it was useless. With Zhou Tianpeng teaming up with Chen Xi, they had the greatest combat strength that the Chinese martial arts world could muster. But no one had expected that at such a critical moment, someone would actually side with the Eight Trigrams School and go up into the ring despite the large sects' hostility!

What did you say?

The two of you would be enough?

Has this person gone crazy?

You're gonna team up with Rao Aimin to take part in a deathmatch against the two grandmasters?!

Liu Yiquan became anxious. "Bro Chen! Stop fooling around!"

"Come back!" Liu Yizhang shouted too.

Yan Hui was getting anxious. "Aiyo! What is going on here? What the hell is going on here?"

He Badao shouted, "Damn, why the fuck did you go up into the ring? Are you drunk, Bro Chen Zhen?! Don't spout such nonsense, c-come down quickly! Quickly! This isn't something that non-affiliates like us can be involved in! The opponents are two martial arts grandmasters. Wh-What are you going up there for!"

Many of the non-affiliates and people from the small sects outside the ring were on rather good terms with Zhang Ye. After last night's fight against the large sects, they had forged a good friendship, so when they saw this occur, they started panicking as well!

"Holy shit!"

"Chen Zhen, get back down here!"

"Don't try to play the hero! This isn't the time for that!"

"It's useless no matter who goes!"

"This is a deathmatch we're talking about!"

"Are you throwing your life away, Bro Chen Zhen?"

The people from the large sects were angered by this. Some of the Eight Trigrams School's disciples present today were quite skilled at kung fu. For example, the fifth disciple, Song Jiao, the sixth disciple, Xu Fan, and even Zhao Yunlong's kung fu were acceptable. But even they did not go up as they knew they would drag her down if they did. But why did you not know that?

"What is that person trying to do?"

"Isn't he Chen Zhen?"

"It's him! It's that shameless guy!"

"Fuck, why did he go up into the ring?"

"Yeah, when Senior Fan and the Huashan Sect's senior brother challenged him just now, he wasn't even their match since he was too afraid to accept their challenge. So why is he going up there now? Two vee two? You were too afraid to even accept a Huashan disciple's challenge. How the fuck can you fight with grandmasters? Will you die if you don't show off?!"

"You're really a fearless one!"

"Isn't he insulting everyone here by doing that?!"

"Chen! You're gonna die!"

"Get the fuck down!"

"Right, get the fuck down!"

"As a nobody, why are you causing trouble!"

"Amitābha, Little Almsgiver, retreat!"

Many people from the large sects spoke out, wanting to stop this farce!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen shouted, "This isn't a match that you can be involved with! Get down!"

A nobody interfered with the deathmatch involving three grandmasters, and he even wanted to participate in the match? This was an insult to many of the large sects' members. If someone qualified had to enter the ring to fight, it should not be him! With his mediocre kung fu, he could not handle an attack from any one of the participants in the ring! In this crucial deathmatch that is about to take place, are you trying to be the fly in the ointment? Take a look at yourself. Do you even think that you can take on grandmasters?

Chen Xi looked at Zhang Ye.

Zhou Tianpeng also stared at him. "Who are you?"

The two grandmasters had such an authoritative gaze that most normal martial artists would not be able to handle looking at them. But Zhang Ye was oblivious to it and nonchalantly uttered, "What does it concern you?"

"Bastard!"

"How can you talk to my master in that manner?!"

The Zhou Family Style School was infuriated!

Zhang Ye laughed. "I've said what I've said. What can you do about it?"

The Iron Palm's Master Sun stepped forward and shouted, "I've said it already. Whoever dares to help Old Crook Rao will be an enemy of our Iron Palm Sect and we will oppose him to the bitter end!"

Zhang Ye looked at him and asked, "Who do you think you are? Who does the Iron Palm Sect think they are?"

Master Sun was furious. "You're looking to die!"

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were floored as they did not expect such a thing to happen. At this moment, the person who

went up into the ring turned out to be that troublemaking non-affiliate from last night!

Xu Fan quickly said, "Chen Zhen, our Eight Trigrams School appreciates your kindness. But you are not their match and you won't help much even if you fight!"

Fifth Senior Sis Song Jiao said, "Please come down."

Zhao Yunlong said anxiously, "This isn't something that a non-affiliate can be involved in! Do you understand that?"

However, Lu Yuhu was stunned. Hearing the words that were spoken by "Chen Zhen," looking at the appearance of that "Chen Zhen" behind his sunglasses, the sense of familiarity strengthened and started surging within him!

In the ring.

When everyone thought that this person was just being ridiculously overconfident in himself, Rao Aimin's words shocked everyone present so much that their jaws almost dropped. Everyone who gave the matter some thought had believed Rao Aimin to be one of the fighters who would definitely not allow an unknown, weird non-affiliate to cause trouble like this, and would definitely have chased him off. With Old Crook Rao's bad temper and sharp tongue, she would probably have lectured him and not appreciated his kindness at all. However, everyone present was stunned when they heard Rao Aimin's response!

Rao Aimin glanced at "Chen Zhen" and asked, "What are you doing here?"

Rao Aimin recognized him at first glance. Ignoring the fact that Zhang Ye was wearing a pair of sunglasses, even if he were to cover his entire head with something, Rao Aimin would still recognize him from his voice. After all, they were quite familiar with each other and understood one another very well.

Zhang Ye snapped, "Why do you think I'm here?"

"Who asked you to come here? Get lost." Rao Aimin raised her chin.

Zhang Ye got angry. "Get lost, your sister. It was easy for you to leave without even saying a proper goodbye, and you didn't even bother to call back much over the past six months. Tell me, who have I offended?"

Rao Aimin replied, "I had important matters to handle. Didn't I already tell you that?"

"You said that you would be back in at most a month, but you, do you know what year it is already? Only you had important matters to handle? Like I don't have important business to attend to?" Zhang Ye became angrier the more he listened. "Do you think that I'm not busier than you? Do you think I don't have more on my plate?"

Rao Aimin scoffed and scorned, "You call 'fighting' with people every day important business?"

Zhang Ye said angrily, "You don't need to worry about who I 'fight' with. At least you can find me when you need me. But you? You actually disappeared for six straight months. Even better, your cell phone was turned off for the past two days. Tell me what you're trying to do. If there's a problem, you can just tell me. If not for my wit, I wouldn't have even known where you'd gone. Let me tell you this, Old Rao! Only I could have found you. If it were anyone else, it would have been impossible to find you!"

The two of them started arguing noisily in front of numerous members of the Chinese martial arts world as though no one else were around!

Liu Yiquan was shocked!

Li Quanneng was shocked!

Yan Hui was shocked!

Chen Xi was shocked!

Zhou Tianpeng was shocked!

The disciples of the Huashan Sect were shocked!

The Zhou Family Style School was shocked!

The people from the large sects were shocked!

The small sects and non-affiliates were shocked!

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples also wore expressions of shock!

What was the meaning of this?

This man...actually knew Rao Aimin!?

And from their tones, why did it sound like two exes talking?

Chapter 931: Are 2,000 Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books enough?

The atmosphere at the venue was exceptionally odd!

Everyone looked at one another blankly, shocked into confusion. The happenings in the ring were totally different from what they had expected. Even the "punctuations" appearing over their heads were different! Especially those unceremonious salutations that had came out of "Chen Zhen's" mouth, those dumbfounded many of them!

Old Rao?

But you?

Get lost, your sister?

Although many of the large sects' people present had responded to the call of the two grandmasters to denounce Rao Aimin, they at most dared to scold her as "Treacherous Rao." Being labeled "treacherous" these days might not even be considered as being scolded anymore, especially in the era of the "motherfucker," which was easily heard anywhere on the Internet. It could not get any more elegant to be called "treacherous" in this case. After all, she was a grandmaster, and even a highly notorious grandmaster at that. She was a hooligan who'd spent half a year doing nothing but going around the country to bring down the Zhou Family Style's training halls and schools. Even if they had fallen out with her, they did not dare act rashly, especially when this person was

Rao Aimin. That was why, at this moment, many of the large sect members were greatly surprised and shocked by those words of that "Non-affiliate Chen Zhen"!

You're calling her Old Rao?

And even saying "but you"? Your sister?

Fuck, that was audacious!

That was really too goddamn audacious!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen looked astounded!

The Iron Palm's Master Sun was also staring with astonishment!

Even those large sect people who were very experienced and had seen it all could only react in that way, not to mention those from the small sects and the non-affiliates outside the ring. When they heard those words, they nearly knelt from the shock!

Liu Yiquan almost fainted. "That's a grandmaster he's talking to!"

"Why is Bro Chen Zhen speaking to her in that manner?" Li Quanneng asked in shock.

"Could it be that he knows Senior Rao?" He Badao suggested in

disbelief.

"That's impossible!" Liu Yizhang said.

Yan Hui held Chenchen's hand as he stared and flapped, "Th-This makes absolutely no sense!"

The others were also in shock!

"Isn't he a non-affiliate like us?"

"Why did Bro Chen start scolding her the moment he went up! He even has the courage to scold a grandmaster?"

"This..."

"Just who on earth is this 'Chen Zhen'?"

In the ring.

Zhang Ye and Rao Aimin were not bothered by the spectators and kept bickering with each other.

Rao Aimin said, "Get lost already. This is none of your business!"

Zhang Ye replied, "It's my business now!"

Rao Aimin said, "With those skills of yours, this is not a place for you to mess around!"

Zhang Ye scoffed, "Ha, don't you dare look down on my skills. Do you think you can defeat two grandmasters just by yourself? Someone has to help you hold off one of them no matter what. If your junior brothers and sisters can't help you, then let me do it!"

Rao Aimin did not outright refuse his offer, but just looked at him. "Are you sure you can do this?"

Zhang Ye declared, "Even if I can't, I must still do it!"

"But this is a deathmatch!" Rao Aimin maintained.

Zhang Ye said, "I know."

Rao Aimin asked, "How are you going to fight then?"

Zhang Ye snorted. "You don't have to worry about that. I naturally have my ways!"

Rao Aimin narrowed her eyes and looked at him again. "Let me ask you again: Are you sure you can do this?"

Zhang Ye boasted, "I can as long as you don't drag me down!"

Rao Aimin stated, "It's not of my fault if you die."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Just watch yourself."

Zhang Ye understood Rao Aimin and Rao Aimin understood him. As the two of them were very familiar with each other, just by exchanging glances, they knew exactly what the other was thinking.

The Eight Trigrams School section.

Song Jiao said incredulously, "There's actually someone in this world who dares to speak to Eldest Senior Sis in that way? This is..."

Xu Fan was also stunned. "Why didn't Eldest Senior Sis get angry?"

Zhao Yunlong also expressed his exasperation. "What the fuck!"

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples knew Rao Aimin very well. Some of them even grew up under her care since childhood. They understood their Eldest Senior Sister's bad temper and sharp tongue better than anyone else. As a result, this incident perplexed them greatly! No one dared to speak to Rao Aimin in such a manner!

Chen Xi was bewildered as he stared at Zhang Ye.

Zhou Tianpeng also frowned.

At this moment, everyone present had only one important question in mind. They wanted to ask: Who on earth is this "Non-affiliate Chen Zhen"?

Suddenly, Yan Hui was caught by surprise and Chenchen slipped from his grasp. He hurriedly chased after her. "Hey! Where are you running off to?!"

Chenchen ran out from the crowd and headed straight in the direction of the Eight Trigrams School. She called out some of their names as she ran over. "Old Song, Old Xu, Old Zhao, Old Lu."

The disciples of the Eight Trigrams Palm were dumbstruck!

"Chenchen?"

"Aiyo!"

"Young ancestor, what are you doing here?"

"It's Chenchen!"

"It's really her!"

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples immediately rushed forward and brought Chenchen into their fold!

Song Jiao rebuked, "How did you come here by yourself? It's too dangerous here!"

Chenchen pointed to the ring. "I came here with him."

Xu Fan said startled, "You came here with him?"

Zhao Yunlong could not understand, so he asked, "Why are you together with 'Chen Zhen'? Weren't you in Beijing?"

Now, if Lu Yuhu was still unable to recognize who "Chen Zhen" was, then he really would be an idiot. Lu Yuhu gave a wry smile. "That person...is not even called Chen Zhen!"

"Ah?"

"What?"

"Who on earth is he?"

"Little Junior Bro, do you know him?"

"What's his background?"

The several of them fired questions at him.

Lu Yuhu wiped the sweat off his forehead and said, "It's not only me who knows him. I think all of you should know him as well!"

Song Jiao asked in surprise, "We know him too?"

Xu Fan said immediately, "How can that be!"

Zhao Yunlong said, "Is there such a person in our martial arts world? I don't have any memory of him!"

Another Eight Trigrams Palm disciple asked, "Don't tell me he's some great person of our martial arts world?"

"It's not wrong to say that he's a great person, but he isn't a great person from our martial arts world!" As there were outsiders around them, Lu Yuhu did not explicitly say his name. "But it shouldn't be! The man I know never learned any Chinese martial arts! He's someone who should be completely unrelated to our group of martial artists! So what is he doing here!?"

Yan Hui was taken aback by that. He suddenly recalled something after he overheard their conversation. He then immediately turned around and stared in disbelief at "Chen Zhen" in the ring. He finally recognized him as well!

Damn!

It's him!

I've been wondering who this goddamn familiar-looking man was!

After finding out his identity, Yan Hui was even more shocked. Why were there always traces of him at every place? When he thought of this person leading the non-affiliates to cause trouble last night and the conflict that took place before the National Martial Arts Conference was convened, Yan Hui could only feel thousand strings of "fuck" flashing before his eyes!

Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and the others who were a distance away were baffled!

"Why did Chen Zhen's kid run over there?"

"The people from the Eight Trigrams School also know that kid?"

"Ah? Chen Zhen and Rao Aimin actually know each other!"

"What's their relationship?"

"I recognize her. She's the orphaned daughter of Rao Aimin's deceased little sister and brother-in-law!"

"What did you say?"

"That's their kid?"

"That kid from back then has already grown up this much?"

"This..."

Everyone from the Chinese martial arts world burst into an uproar!

There was too much information. Everyone was getting more and more confused about the identity of "Chen Zhen." Why was he taking care of the daughter of Rao Aimin's little sister? Why could Rao Aimin put the child in his care with such confidence? This was not as simple as just knowing each other!

Zhou Tianpeng gazed at Little Chenchen for a long time.

Chen Xi looked at Rao Aimin and Zhang Ye. "Have you two decided yet?"

Zhang Ye answered, "Yes, it shall be a two-on-two match!"

Chen Xi asked, "This was supposed to be a three vee three match. Are you sure you won't need a third person?"

"That's not necessary!" Zhang Ye said.

Rao Aimin did not say anything, but her attitude showed her acquiescence.

Her attitude once again shocked everyone. What was the meaning of this? Was Rao Aimin really going to join forces with "Chen Zhen" to deal with Grandmaster Chen Xi and Grandmaster Zhou Tianpeng? She didn't reject him? She wasn't afraid that he would drag her down?

Chen Xi did not expect this either!

Zhou Tianpeng said, "Then let's sign the agreement!"

At once, a disciple of the Zhou Family Style handed up a copy of the "legal documentation" for the deathmatch from below the ring, so it was obvious that this document was prepared beforehand. He said, "With the signing, each participant will be responsible for their respective lives!"

Zhou Tianpeng picked up the brush and wrote his name.

Chen Xi picked up the brush after him and wrote his name with a few strokes.

As they were martial artists who communicated mainly through their fists, even though there were those who enjoyed calligraphy, it was clear that these two were not among that group. The

pennings of their names were each more ugly than the other.

Zhang Ye glanced at the names in derision. When he picked up the brush, his entire aura changed. With a few lively and vigorous strokes, he wrote his name as well.

He was open and aboveboard with this!

It was signed: Chen Zhen!

Rao Aimin also signed her name and glanced at the name written by Zhang Ye. She said nothing.

Zhang Ye's calligraphy was so beautiful that it could not be described by just that word alone. The two characters were like a work of art. Within the lively and vigorous strokes, there was no lack of strength and the ending stroke surged with a sense of carefreeness. This calligraphy had once again stunned the people present at the venue.

Comparing Zhang Ye's signature to theirs, Chen Xi and Zhou Tianpeng both looked somewhat disconcerted.

The other martial artists were also a little lost for words. For a hooligan who had used a brick to make sneak attacks on other people last night, a nasty fellow who incited a fight for no good reason, damn, could his words be penned any more beautifully than this?! There was probably no one in the entire Chinese martial arts world who had better calligraphy than him, was

there!?

They completed the signing of the deathmatch agreement!

The atmosphere immediately turned tense!

A person from the National Martial Arts Association announced, "The deathmatch shall begin in 10 minutes! Please get ready!"

Chen Xi sat down in the ring and closed his eyes.

Zhou Tianpeng took a deep breath. He did not sit down, but stood there to let himself calm down gradually. His rate of breathing was also getting slower, only taking breaths once every ten seconds.

Rao Aimin did the same.

Every martial artist had their own set of qi flow techniques. Before the deathmatch today, they absolutely needed to adjust their mental state and physical fitness to the optimum level.

Only Zhang Ye was different. This fellow did not bother with adjusting his fitness at all, because he had something else to do. When Rao Aimin asked if he was up to the task, Zhang Ye actually knew that he was definitely not up to it. At least in his present condition, he was certainly no match for the grandmasters. Although his physical fitness was enhanced respectively by each of the 1,000 Stats Category Fruits he had eaten, the grandmasters had

a lifetime of training in martial arts as a foundation. They had the peak combat strength within the Chinese martial arts world. Even if they lacked some aspects such as Zhang Ye's agility, they wouldn't be inferior by much. In addition, the grandmasters practiced an internal style of martial arts. Therefore, other than the physical aspects, almost all of their power came from the "inside." And there was also the incomprehensible domain and attacks involving concealed power that Zhang Ye was a total amateur at. Even if he wanted to depend on brute strength to fight against them, he still knew that it was impossible to beat them no matter how confident he was!

But Zhang Ye did not hesitate in getting into the ring and signing the deathmatch agreement!

Because he was enraged!

Because he knew that he still had the Taiji Fist to depend on!

If 100 books were not enough?

Then would 500 books be enough?

If 500 books were not enough?

Then would 1,000 books be enough?

If 1,000 books were not enough either?

Then fuck your mother!

Surely 2,000 books would be enough!

Chapter 932: The legendary grandmaster!

A deathmatch!

Nine minutes to go!

The National Martial Arts Conference venue at the top of the hill fell completely silent. No one dared to make a peep right now. Even if someone had an itchy throat and wanted to cough, they had to quickly cover their mouth to cough in the most silent way possible as they were afraid that they would cause a disturbance to the three grandmasters meditating in the ring.

The blowing of the wind was the only thing that could be heard on the hilltop.

As well as noises emitting from someone's cell phone. Di di, da da da. It sounded like someone was playing a game. Carefully listening to the game music, it was the latest mobile version of Plants vs. Zombies.

Who was it?

Fuck, who dared to play games at a time like this?

And why was the game's volume so loud?

After looking around the crowd, everyone was shocked to realize

that the sound originated from the fight ring itself. It turned out that "Chen Zhen" was actually playing the game on his cell phone, and as he was sitting quite close the microphone, the game sounds on his cell phone were amplified even louder!

Liu Yiquan: "..."

He Badao: "..."

Yan Hui: "..."

Chenchen: "..."

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples: "..."

Will this guy really be able fight the grandmasters?

This is a fucking deathmatch we're talking about! You, a non-affiliate whose kung fu is mediocre and is surrounded by three grandmasters, have only a few more minutes left until it begins! You don't even know if you will survive! So how can you still be in the mood to play games at such a time? Just how calm can you get!

Just what kind of a person are you!

Everyone was exasperated out of their minds by this behavior of his!

Only Zhang Ye himself knew that his motive was not to play the game, but in fact use it to hide what he was really doing. Otherwise, if the crowd saw him tapping at the air, it would surely arouse suspicion. By this point, he had opened up the game ring's merchant shop. He tapped on the Taiji Fist Skill Experience Book that he had received from the lottery draw a long time ago, though it looked to everyone else like he was tapping on his cell phone screen. Over the past two years or so, Zhang Ye had gradually bought over a hundred of these skill experience books. But to cope with today's situation, he was ready to push it to the limit. He had almost 1.9 billion Reputation Points remaining, and the cost of each Taiji Fist Skill Experience Book was 1 million Reputation Points!

Buy!

Buy!

Buy!

He tapped on the buy button like crazy!

Afterwards, he flipped them open one by one and the Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books dissolved into many glowing particles of light. The contents surged straight into his mind, becoming a part of him. If anyone could see what Zhang Ye saw, they would certainly be shocked into dropping their jaw. With the countless glowing particles of light surging into his mind, image after image of the Taiji Fist's moves flashed through Zhang Ye's mind. He could feel his strength burgeoning without end!

100 books!

200 books!

300 books!

With his actions getting faster, the tapping on his cell phone also grew louder.

The people outside the ring were looking at him at their wits' end.

Some of the large sects' disciples were gnashing their teeth in hate and nearly insulted someone's mother!

Eventually, Zhou Tianpeng, who was meditating with his eyes closed, could no longer bear with this disturbance. The corners of his eyes twitched several times and he opened them, fed up. "Do you have a screw loose?"

Zhang Ye subconsciously responded the moment he looked up at him, "Do you have a screwdriver?"

Zhou Tianpeng: "..."

Everyone: "..."

Chen Xi, too, could no longer pretend to not have heard and opened his eyes in frustration. With the game's noisy sound effects and background music, how could he possibly still meditate in peace? So he walked over to Zhou Tianpeng and discussed in low whispers their strategy for the battle. In this deathmatch, they had to terminate all of Rao Aimin's kung fu and were not allowed to make any mistakes. Otherwise, there would never be a day of peace after today!

Chen Xi asked softly, "Who will you take?"

"Let me handle Rao Aimin," Zhou Tianpeng replied.

Chen Xi made a noise of understanding. "Then I will take care of that non-affiliate."

Zhou Tianpeng asked, "Who on earth is that person anyway?"

Chen Xi pondered for a moment before saying, "I don't know and can't judge either. But I have some memory of him from last night. During his duel with a Kunlun Sect disciple, his skills were quite average as well as scummy. From the way that he is still playing games before the start of a deathmatch, he must definitely be just an amateur, so there's nothing to fear about him."

Zhou Tianpeng nodded. "I'll test Rao Aimin's skill first."

Chen Xi said, "Alright, I'll back you up whenever. Just be careful

of Rao Aimin's Swimming Body form."

"I will," Zhou Tianpeng responded.

The two of them saw only Rao Aimin as a threat and did not take "Chen Zhen" seriously. In the Chinese martial arts world, there were only a handful of experts. Which of those people did they not know about? Would there be anyone they couldn't identify? But they had never even heard of this non-affiliate called "Chen Zhen" before, so there was really no point in taking him too seriously. For someone who would resort to using a brick in a duel and being such a young non-affiliate martial artist, even if he did start practicing martial arts when he was in his mother's womb, he could never get three attacks in against Chen Xi. Moreover, this would be without Chen Xi using his concealed power.

Everyone saw this deathmatch as a two-on-one match in practice. Rao Aimin would be taking on the duo of Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi. No one included "Chen Zhen" as part of the battle.

Zhang Ye was still furiously "eating" the skill experience books!

His hand was constantly purchasing the item!

1,000 books!

1,500 books!

1,700 books!

Finally, almost all 1.9 billion Reputation Points were spent. Zhang Ye did not bother spending whatever leftover points there were. At this moment, including the 100-odd Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books that Zhang Ye had eaten in the past, the total experience that he had summed to a terrifying 2,000-odd experience books! Zhang Ye's mind was brimming with images of [Taiji fish motifs](#), a series of Taiji moves, and the breathing techniques for the moves. With his mind overflowing with information, he exited the game on his cell phone and closed his eyes as he hurriedly tried to organize his thoughts and take in all of the knowledge that he had gained from eating these skill experience books!

The experience was too great!

The amount of knowledge that he now had was shocking!

With every bit absorbed, Zhang Ye's comprehension of Taiji reached a higher plane. While there were no changes to his physical fitness, which remained the same as after he had "eaten" those 1,000 Fruits of each stat category, his martial arts skill kept soaring! One level, two levels, three levels. This feeling was so great and wonderful that there were no words to describe it!

There was still a minute to go before the start of the deathmatch!

At last, Zhang Ye opened his eyes. Even he did not know what plane his martial arts had reached by now. But as far as everyone else could see, there were no visible changes to Zhang Ye.

Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi had gotten ready and each stood in a corner of the fight ring.

Rao Aimin had also prepared herself to her best condition. She looked at Zhang Ye. "Can you?"

Zhang Ye looked back at her. "Probably."

Rao Aimin said quietly, "When the fighting starts, I won't be able look after you."

"That's not necessary." Zhang Ye said, "Just concentrate on taking on Zhou Tianpeng. How many attacks do you need me to hold Chen Xi off for?"

Rao Aimin glanced at Zhou Tianpeng and said, "Thirty."

Zhang Ye fell silent for a moment then said, "Alright."

They took their positions.

The four of them had chosen their spots to begin from!

The Eight Trigrams School's Xu Fan said anxiously, "Fifth Senior Sis, will that Chen Zhen really be of any help?"

"Who knows!" Song Jiao exclaimed. "Why was he playing games before the start of the match? He must have a really bad gaming addiction! If I'd known that, I would've gone in his place instead!"

Zhao Yunlong looked at Lu Yuhu. "Isn't that person too unreliable?"

It was time!

Suddenly, one of the National Martial Arts Association's referees announced, "The deathmatch will now officially begin!"

The entire venue immediately erupted!

The large sects started a rabid commotion!

"Come on, Master!"

"Grandmaster Zhou, you can do it!"

"Do your best!"

"Martial Uncle is almighty!"

"The Zhou Family Style shall prevail!"

"Grandmaster Zhou shall be victorious!"

Several hundred voices rang out across the venue!

When the Eight Trigrams School's disciples saw this, they started shouting too!

"Eldest Senior Sis, you can do it!"

"Don't hold back, Eldest Senior Sis!"

"Beat him up!"

"Be careful, Eldest Senior Sis!"

Meanwhile, Zhang Ye, who was also in the fight ring with them, seemed to have been forgotten.

Zhang Ye did not mind. He just walked quietly to the southwest corner of the fight ring with his hands behind his back and did not say anything.

Five seconds.

Ten seconds.

The cheering below the ring grew louder and louder, but it fell silent up in the ring. The opponents looked at each other, but no

one made the first move!

Suddenly, Zhou Tianpeng was the first to break the deadlock. Kicking off the ground, his entire person shot forth like a cannonball. With a shout, he smashed toward Rao Aimin with a punch that seemingly carried a ton of weight behind it!

This was what it was like to be in a battle of grandmasters. Either they did not make a move, or, if they did, they would attack to kill!

But no one expected that Rao Aimin would not move. She did not even blink or even put up a defense!

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples watched in fright!

"Senior Sis!"

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

It wasn't until the incoming punch was an arm's length away that Rao Aimin moved. Floating into Eight Trigrams footwork, she transferred into the [kun stance](#). Not only was she able to avoid Zhou Tianpeng's punch, she even stuck fast to Zhou Tianpeng and threw a palm strike at him!

Zhou Tianpeng blocked with his elbow and counterattacked with a kick!

Rao Aimin seamlessly executed another Eight Trigrams footwork step to easily shift herself slightly behind Zhou Tianpeng before striking with her palm again!

In a matter of seconds, the two of them had exchanged several blows!

This was what it was like to be in a battle between grandmasters! It was spectacular!

Many people in the audience forgot to breathe. They held their breaths as they fully concentrated on the fight in the ring!

Chen Xi did not move.

Neither did Zhang Ye.

In fact, Chen Xi had been facing Rao Aimin all this while. Wherever Rao Aimin moved to, his feet would adjust in that direction in anticipation. He seemed ready to rush forward to help at any moment, but there was no reason to do so at this time. For now, he just wanted to see if Zhou Tianpeng could handle Rao Aimin with his greatly improved kung fu. If he could, then Chen Xi had no need to take action and aid him. That would save them some face. After all, a two-on-one match was not really something to be proud of!

After three attacks, the two grandmasters were evenly matched.

The disciples from the Zhou Family Style were getting excited.

"Good!"

"Master is awesome!"

"Go, Master, go!"

"Kill that Treacherous Rao!"

The Zhou Family Style disciples and others from the large sects also gained a confidence boost from watching this!

However, the fight was evenly matched after the first three moves. When Rao Aimin executed her fourth attack, all the large sect disciples who had just been cheering suddenly went quiet!

Rao Aimin swivel stepped and immediately attacked with a barrage of Eight Trigrams Linking Palms!

Zhou Tianpeng wanted to dodge this but could not, so he had no choice but to grit his teeth and take her head-on for three of the strikes. But by Rao Aimin's third strike, Zhou Tianpeng was unable to hold off her attacks any longer. He yelled, having already shown his full strength, and mustered his concealed power into his right fist. This could burst apart Rao Aimin's attack, so he repulsed her Linking Palms, which were also struck with her concealed power!

Eight footprints could be seen clearly on the wooden floor of the fight ring. Two of them belonged to Zhou Tianpeng, who had made them while taking the hard blows from the attacks. The remaining footprints in the thick wooden floor belonged to Rao Aimin!

If it were an attack directed purely at the wooden floor, a lot of the people present today could also leave their imprints. It was nothing less than needing enough strength to do so. But what had happened in the ring was entirely different. Zhou Tianpeng and Rao Aimin had not channeled any force into their feet and were just attacking each other. When their concealed power was transmitted into their opponents, there would naturally be a shockwave sent through the body of the person taking the attack. This was an astonishing sight for many of those who had not seen a battle between grandmasters before!

Song Jiao shouted, "Eldest Senior Sis, follow up your advantage!"

Xu Fan said excitedly, "Old Crook Zhou is no match for you!"

Chenchen cried out, "Auntie, you can do it!"

The non-affiliates said in astonishment:

"Is this what it means to be a grandmaster?"

"This..."

"This is too scary!"

"Heavens!"

Meanwhile, the real martial arts experts looked apprehensive!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen gasped, "Grandmaster Zhou is not her equal!"

The Iron Palm's Master Sun was also getting anxious. "Grandmaster Zhou can't go it alone!"

"Rao Aimin's skill is too great!" the Kunlun Sect's leader exclaimed with a sunken expression. He had not expected that Zhou Tianpeng still could not compare to her after all these years!

Zhou Tianpeng did not look too good!

Even though Zhou Tianpeng was not exactly losing yet, after only a few attacks, many of the experts present could see that Zhou Tianpeng was not a match for Rao Aimin whether at moves or skill level!

Rao Aimin was indeed still that past Rao Aimin!

Even after disappearing for many years, she was still that legendary figure in the Chinese martial arts world. In a one-on-one fight, nobody was a match for her!

Watching from his side, Zhang Ye could feel a tingle run down his spine!

So Old Rao was actually this amazing?

Taiji Fish pattern ([Yin Yang Symbol](#))

[Kun](#)

Chapter 933: Zhang Ye's concealed power!

The Zhou Family was panicking!

"Grandmaster Chen!"

"Grandmaster Chen, what are you waiting for!"

"Finish off that Treacherous Rao together!"

"Attack her together!"

"At this time, you can't mind your honor!"

"If Rao Aimin is allowed to continue acting that arrogant, our entire martial arts world is done for!"

Rao Aimin remained calm and dealt another palm strike at Zhou Tianpeng. With that strike, Rao Aimin remained rooted in her spot, while Zhou Tianpeng stumbled back!

The difference between them was obvious!

Rao Aimin glanced at him. "That all you got?"

In the entire Chinese martial arts world, perhaps only Rao Aimin was qualified to speak so contemptuously to a grandmaster!

Zhou Tianpeng's face darkened as he was forced to turn to his last resort. "Old Chen, back me up!"

Even though Zhou Tianpeng had not yet given all his effort, he knew that Rao Aimin was holding back as well! Both of them were waiting to deliver their fatal blow to the other!

Chen Xi, not too far away, sighed shallowly. He looked at Rao Aimin and said, "I'm sorry then! Watch out!" He knew that he had no choice but to attack!

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples suddenly looked horrified!

Lu Yuhu cried out, "Eldest Senior Sis, be careful!"

Zhao Yunlong said enraged, "Old Crook Chen is coming for you!"

Song Jiao yelled, "Eldest Senior Sis, be careful!"

They were haunted by fear! If their Eldest Senior Sister took Old Crook Zhou alone, the chance of victory was enormous. But if Chen Xi joined the battle, then their Eldest Senior Sister would be in danger!

The situation was suddenly reversed!

The atmosphere became strained!

The next moment, the Huashan Sect's leader, Chen Xi, made his move. Darting forward, Chen Xi advanced three meters from his original spot. He was heading straight for Rao Aimin and Zhou Tianpeng!

The Huashan Sect's disciples said excitedly:

"Come on, Master!"

"Our sect leader will definitely win this!"

"Everyone has a responsibility to exterminate Treacherous Rao!"

Chen Xi closed in on Rao Aimin. With a yell, he showed an original stance of the Huashan Sect that had never been passed down to anyone outside of the school!

In everyone's anxious gaze, there were only Chen Xi, Zhou Tianpeng, and Rao Aimin in the ring. In the moment, even Chen Xi and Zhou Tianpeng had forgotten that this was a two-on-two match and there was still another person in the ring with them!

Zhang Ye made his move. He lightly took three paces at a speed that was not fast, but had already drifted to Rao Aimin's side. He slowly got into an opening stance that no one could recognize. At this moment, Zhang Ye's bearing looked completely different from before!

The crowd was stunned.

Fan Wen said, "Chen Zhen?"

Master Sun said, "It's him!"

Liu Yiquan hollered, "Bro Chen, don't go!"

Lu Yuhu said, "Y-You can't block that!"

Song Jiao exclaimed, "Quick, dodge that attack!"

Chen Xi was stunned and changed the direction of his attack. He headed straight for Zhang Ye and drove his palm strike toward him. This palm strike was meant for Rao Aimin and had a great deal of force. The attack was extremely ruthless. Even after redirecting it at "Chen Zhen," he did not hold back. He was already committed to the attack, so even if he wanted to stop, it was impossible to do so!

You're gonna get yourself killed!

This is what you get!

Chen Xi's gaze turned ruthless as he found a clear purpose. Finish off Chen Zhen first, then join Zhou Tianpeng to deal with Rao Aimin!

However, Chen Xi and everyone else did not expect "Chen Zhen" to still look so calm at this moment; there was no change in his appearance at all. He did not dodge, instead raising his hands in a seemingly slow manner, although it was actually a very fast motion!

Zhang Ye raised his hands and flicked his wrists, forming a strange rhythm that alternated between fast and slow. He warded off Chen Xi's palm strike with his wrist. For a second, it seemed like they froze there. Right afterwards, Zhang Ye pivoted. Swinging his wrist downward, his opponent's strength was coolly negated with the move. That swinging of the wrist had somehow diverted all of his opponent's momentum into thin air!

The palm strike was stopped!

Chen Xi was also stopped!

It wasn't like Chen Xi wanted to stop where he was. During the attack of his palm strike, he was in a constant state of motion. Just like a runner could not come to a halt all of a sudden, he required a buffer and time to come to a complete stop! But the scene that played out before Chen Xi's eyes had surprised him. He had been stopped just like that even though he was moving very quickly before that. All of his strength was suddenly reduced to nothing as he lost all of his momentum, leaving him standing there!

It was a very strange sight to behold!

So strange that it felt unbelievable!

Zhou Tianpeng was stunned!

Rao Aimin's eyebrows arched.

Nobody in the crowd could react, all staring up at the ring with surprise!

"What's the matter?"

"Grandmaster Chen, what's the matter?"

"Why did you stop?"

"Wha-What just happened here?"

"Who can tell me what just happened?"

"Could it be that Grandmaster Chen was holding back? He was worried that he would strike him dead with just a single palm strike?"

"Master! Don't hold back!"

No one could understand what they were seeing. They could only convince themselves that Chen Xi had held back, afraid that his attack would be too heavy on his opponent, so had decreased the

strength behind his palm strike to minimize any damage!

However, only Chen Xi, Zhou Tianpeng, and a small few Chinese martial arts experts present today could see clearly. Although they did not know what had happened, they knew that this was not a matter of Chen Xi holding back his strength!

This was not good!

This "Chen Zhen" was definitely not just some non-affiliate!

The face of Fan Wen, part of the Huashan Sect, grew cold with fear. "Senior Bro, be careful!"

When Fan Wen shouted that, many of the people from the large and small sects were stunned!

Be careful?

Be careful of what?

Why would Grandmaster Chen have to be careful?

But as it turned out, the next second, everyone understood exactly why Fan Wen had shouted those words of caution!

Zhang Ye followed up with a move which was different from

before. This time, he actively sought to attack with a very odd-looking set of moves. His palm struck out not in a straight line, but rather moved along an imaginary arc in midair. This palm strike started off slow but gathered speed while moving along the curved trajectory and pushed toward Chen Xi!

It wasn't a cross!

It wasn't a vertical chop!

It was just a simple push!

Logically, such a move would not have much offensive strength. Chen Xi blocked it with his own palm, which was imbued with some concealed power as he thought that he could use it to curb the enemy in one move. This was a move that was used to bully another since in most situations, a grandmaster would never apply concealed power when they came up against another internal martial arts expert who hadn't achieved concealed power. With the concealed power applied, there was no way that a person who didn't have it could block it. The fight would not go on any further than this! Meanwhile, Rao Aimin and Zhou Tianpeng were having an increasingly fierce battle. Zhou Tianpeng was already showing signs of defeat, so Chen Xi was anxious to aid him. As a result, he acted unreasonably by dealing an attack laced with concealed power!

Rao Aimin's saw this in her peripheral vision. "Dodge!"

Song Jiao shouted, "It's concealed power!"

Lu Yuhu cried out, "Shameless!"

Zhao Yunlong cursed, "Old Crook Chen, how shameful you are!"

The brothers, Liu Yiquan and Liu Yizhang, exclaimed, "Bro Chen, dodge that!"

But Zhang Ye did not dodge, or rather, there was no time to do so. An unknown force made him push his hand out, carrying an unbroken and ceaseless strength along with it. All of this was done instinctively. Zhang Ye did not really have full control of it!

Boom!

The two palms collided in midair!

Zhang Ye felt an enormous force explode out from his palms, then the corners of his mouth twitched and his entire person trembled as he stumbled back three steps!

Looking at Chen Xi across from him, Chen Xi was also destabilized as he took a large step backward. His flow of qi was disrupted and his palm was covered with sweat!

Chen Xi was stunned!

Zhou Tianpeng and Rao Aimin, in the midst of battle, were also

stunned!

The several hundred martial sects' disciples of the Chinese martial arts world were stunned as well!

In a single exchange where they pitted their palm strikes against each other, Zhang Ye and Chen Xi were both injured!

Fan Wen gasped!

The Kunlun Sect leader's heart skipped a beat!

Song Jiao exclaimed in shock, "Concealed power!"

Xu Fan said ecstatically, "That's concealed power!"

Lu Yuhu simply could not believe his eyes. His jaw dropped! How did he know how to use concealed power? How could he have possibly trained to such a level that he could use concealed power!?

"Heavens!"

"This..."

"Who is he?"

"Fuck! Who the heck is he!?"

He Badao was utterly shocked!

The people of the large and small sects, as well as the non-affiliates, were all stunned too!

This was far too shocking. A non-affiliate whose origins were unknown actually pitted his skill against a Chinese martial arts grandmaster and did not lose. Further, both sides could even use concealed power!

This was too fucking scary!

Which crevice did this amazing "Chen Zhen" jump out from?!

Chapter 934: How do you know Taiji Fist!?

The entire venue was in shock!

A lot of people were so shocked that they could not even say a thing. They were having trouble accepting all that was playing out in front of them!

Even the currently fighting Rao Aimin said in disbelief, "What the fuck, how did a rascal like you learn to use concealed power? Are you on steroids or something?"

Zhang Ye shrugged. "There are a lot of things you don't know about me."

Rao Aimin threw a palm strike at Zhou Tianpeng, then said, "Then I won't be worrying about you anymore. I'll leave that old Chen fogey to you!"

"Wasn't that what we agreed on from the start?" Zhang Ye watched Chen Xi closely, but did not make any moves. "You take one, and I take one! That's what a two-vee-two is!"

Those people who had encountered Zhang Ye and exchanged blows with him during last night's mass brawl were all breaking out into cold sweat now. They thought to themselves just how lucky it was that this guy had only used a brick to smash them yesterday. If he had used his attacks like he was today and attacked their heads, they probably would not be sitting here today!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen wore a solemn expression!

The Huashan Sect senior bro who had tried to incite Zhang Ye to a duel earlier was now so embarrassed that he did not dare utter a word. In fact, he was very frightened by the turn of events and cursed in his mind with a lingering sense of fear. Fuck, if you could already use concealed power, why did you still bother to argue back and forth with us while standing together with those non-affiliates! Like any one of us below grandmaster level were a match for you? But you? You even scolded and hassled us? How could you be so devious!

And that Swimming Body Eight Trigrams Brick?

Eight Trigrams Brick, your sister! Fuck!

Elsewhere.

A lean non-affiliate looked at Liu Yiquan and the others, dumbfounded. "That guy traveled here with your group, right?"

Liu Yiquan wiped at his sweat. "Yes."

A female non-affiliate asked them woodenly, "How did you guys get to know him?"

Liu Yizhang looked more aghast than anyone around him. "Me

and my brother, plus Old He and Old Li, met him on the bus while we were traveling here. He had a kid with him and told us that he was also a member of the martial arts community. He said that he had lost his invite and asked if he could travel with us. He said his name was Chen Zhen and his master was someone named Huo Yuanjia? And there was also another master called Huang something?"

Li Quanneng had a better memory. "Huang Feihong."

"Right, that's the name," agreed He Badao while nodding.

One of the veteran non-affiliates said, "In our martial arts world, among the worthy experts, there is no one named Huang Feihong or Huo Yuanjia. Neither is there anyone called Chen Zhen! That must be a fake name! Him losing his invite must have been an excuse, since he probably did not even have one in the first place. He was never invited to this National Martial Arts Conference!"

Many of the non-affiliates did not seem too bothered by it. All of them could only think of one thing, the same thing: Oh my god! We actually traveled together with a Chinese martial arts expert? We actually fought fiercely alongside a martial arts expert who could rival a martial arts grandmaster, and took part in a massive brawl last night with him against our enemies? And even scolded alongside him?

In the ring.

Chen Xi looked imposing. "Who are you really?"

Zhang Ye laughed. "I am who I am."

Chen Xi said, "Then which martial school do you belong to?"

Zhang Ye smiled. "None of them."

Chen Xi asked, "What martial arts style do you practice?"

Zhang Ye said, "Guess."

In the other side of the ring, Zhou Tianpeng had lost a lot of strength, and it was getting more and more difficult for him to hold out. He was forced to shout, "Old Chen, get over here! I can't hang on for much longer!"

Rao Aimin rounded up the set of Eight Trigrams Palm's moves. She was one of the Chinese martial arts world's five grandmasters, and currently the most skilled disciple of the Eight Trigrams Palm. Even the leader of the Eight Trigrams School was slightly less skilled than Rao Aimin, as Rao Aimin had mastered all of the Eight Trigrams Palm's techniques to the pinnacle!

Chen Xi was getting impatient. "Step aside!"

"No way." Zhang Ye smiled.

Chen Xi said soberly, "You're not my equal."

Zhang Ye said, "You can't do anything to me anyway. And if I try my best, I might even be able to injure you some!" In his game ring's inventory, he still had the 1-Up item that he'd received a long time ago from the lottery draw. With two lives, he would naturally be more confident in such a situation!

Chen Xi said with a dark expression, "This is none of your business. Why would you want to make our entire martial arts world your enemy?"

Zhang Ye chuckled. "Do you and Zhou Tianpeng represent our entire martial arts world? And even if you do, who cares if I make you two my enemy? This bro has offended many people, so it's not like including our martial arts world amongst them would make any difference to me!"

Chen Xi was enraged. "You talk really big!"

Zhang Ye laughed, "Hur hur, that's because you do not know me."

That's right, Zhang Ye was not actually talking big!

In the audience, when Yan Hui and Lu Yuhu heard this, they didn't know whether to laugh or cry. At the venue today, perhaps only the two of them really knew that "Chen Zhen" was speaking the truth. He really did not care if he offended the Chinese martial arts world, as this fellow had already offended too many peers from too many different industries. His nickname of "shit stirrer" was definitely not for nothing! He was a professional shit stirrer

with 20 years of experience! The only thing they probably did not expect was that he would come to stir shit in the Chinese martial arts world!

Chen Xi took a deep breath, then suddenly spat out, "Then let's give it a try!" He took a large stride forward and quickly got beside Zhang Ye, wanting to end the battle quickly. He could not drag it out any further!

As a grandmaster, his immediate attack was filled with concealed power!

Zhang Ye's eyes narrowed. He met the attack with his palm and pinned it at Chen Xi's wrist, twisting and squeezing.

Chen Xi's force in his palm was immediately reduced by a good half. With a low yell, his other hand turned towards Zhang Ye's face!

Zhang Ye ducked to dodge and managed to avoid the attack, but then saw Chen Xi changing his attack trajectory, shooting his palm down to smash against Zhang Ye's shoulder. Zhang Ye could not avoid this, and neither did he intend to avoid it. Under everyone's shocked gaze, he lowered his shoulder and went down on one knee, as though he were taking the palm strike on purpose. Surprisingly, he did not suffer any injuries. Then he straightened up and shrugged his shoulder up and returned the attack with an abrupt force!

Chen Xi's concealed power laced palm strike was unexpectedly

bounced back by the shoulder's motion and came back to bite him instead!

Just what was this martial art style?

Why did it feel so familiar?

Chen Xi was shocked and was not having a pleasant fight at all!

In the audience, a veteran master fighter from the National Martial Arts Association suddenly said, "That looks familiar! Why does that martial arts technique look so familiar?" Yet he could not pinpoint what it was!

What could it be?

Just what could this martial arts technique be?

A lot of people were thinking!

Meanwhile, Zhang Ye and Chen Xi continued their match against each other in the ring!

Chen Xi was superbly displaying the Huashan Sect's martial arts. Sinister and ruthless moves were the characteristics of their martial sect. It was a very difficult martial arts style to face!

However, Zhang Ye's coping of it astonished the spectators further and further!

Zhang Ye did not make many moves, but every move he did make skillfully deflected all of the incoming attacks!

Repulse!

Deflect!

Thrust!

Push!

Yank!

Sever!

Elbow!

Bump!

Negating the force! Transforming the force! Applying the force!

Placed in a situation where his skills were inferior to his opponent, he still managed to fight on equal footing with Chen Xi!

Lu Yuhu was excitedly cheering, "Amazing! So cool!"

Zhao Yunlong rejoiced. "Great fighting!"

Song Jiao shouted excitedly, "Beautiful! Very beautiful!"

Xu Fan was amazed. "Great kung fu!"

A female disciple of the Eight Trigrams Palm was in disbelief even now. "Damn! That guy is actually a match for a grandmaster! Wh-What is this kung fu!"

It was obvious to everyone that Chen Xi's martial arts were better than "Chen Zhen's," but "Chen Zhen's" martial arts were just too strange and unconventional. It was a totally different type of martial arts that did not follow any known form within the Chinese martial arts world, yet everyone knew that it was not randomly executed by the fighter. This was absolutely a complete style of Chinese martial arts, from its defense to its attacks!

The Huashan Sect disciples were both astonished and angered!

"Master!"

"Come on!"

"The Huashan Sect will definitely emerge victorious!"

"Master shall emerge victorious!"

Ten exchanges had gone by!

Zhang Ye could not do anything to Chen Xi!

But neither could Chen Xi do anything to him for the moment!

Chen Xi was growing frustrated the more he fought. If it were his skills that were not a match for the opponent, there was nothing he could do. But the issue was that his skills were better than the opponent's, yet he couldn't do anything to him. This feeling was much too unbearable. He understood that the opponent's martial arts style had an upper hand because he had never seen nor come across it before, so he did not understand the basis of the moves. This was his reason for getting so frustrated. He felt like he couldn't summon any strength at all. There were even a few times the opponent had negated all the force behind his attacks!

Zhou Tianpeng was still shouting, "Old Chen!" He was losing ground in his fight!

Chen Xi was frantic.

Why?

Why did this martial arts style feel so familiar when he had

clearly never encountered it before?

He could not understand! He could not understand no matter how he thought about it!

Everyone in the crowd was gawking!

"Why did it turn out like this?"

"Why?"

"My goodness, what martial arts style is that?"

"How can there be such an awesome martial arts style?"

"He clearly did not exert any strength, so how did he negate his opponent's force?"

"How did he manage to block that move?"

"Eh, how did he bounce that attack back? Grandmaster Chen has not managed to land a single hit yet!"

"This is too weird!"

"Which sect's kung fu is that?"

Suddenly, an extremely experienced and old martial arts master in the audience exclaimed, "I realize now! I've figured it out!" Then he looked astounded!

All of a sudden, the Kunlun Sect leader in the audience was also stunned. "How can it be! How is that possible!?" He had also realized what it was and wore a shocked expression!

"Which school's kung fu is it?"

"Yes! It's definitely that!"

"That is what we call a force of four taels yielding a thousand catties!"

"A balance of yin and yang, hardness coupled with softness. It's definitely that! It has to be!"

Quite a number of the large sects' leaders or elders had recognized it by now and were also dumbfounded when they realized!

But most of the others still did not understand!

"Ah?"

"What is it?"

"What kung fu is that?"

"Why is everyone reacting like that?"

Liu Yiquan, He Badao, and the other non-affiliates could not understand!

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were also confused. What major events had they not witnessed before in the many years of their lives? Why were all of these veteran martial arts masters looking so horrified? What sort of kung fu made you react in such a way? What sort of kung fu has astonished you so much?

Finally, the answer was revealed!

As the saying went, those closely involved cannot see as clearly as those not. Chen Xi heard the shouting from outside the ring and something clicked in his head. He finally understood too. His expression changed greatly and he suddenly stopped attacking. He took a few steps back in extreme dread and gazed at Zhang Ye like he had seen a ghost. He stared at the stance that Zhang Ye was in and bellowed, "H-How do you know Taiji Fist!?"

Chapter 935: The successor of Taiji Fist appears!

"How do you know Taiji Fist!?"

With those words, the entire venue fell silent!

Liu Yiquan blinked several times. "Taiji Fist?"

He Badao said in a daze, "What's Taiji Fist?"

A large sect's disciple said in confusion, "What fist?"

In the crowd, people were subconsciously repeating the same few words. Then, all of a sudden, everyone was so shocked that they nearly faceplanted. They only managed to react after a long while!

"Taiji Fist?"

"Holy fuck!"

"What?"

"What is Grandmaster Chen saying?"

"The Taiji Fist that has been lost for over a hundred years?"

"That's not possible!"

"How could it be Taiji Fist?"

"Hasn't Taiji Fist been lost for over a hundred years already?!"

Everyone paled!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen was scared silly by the revelation.
"This, this..."

Everyone was so shocked by the claim that their souls nearly flew out of their bodies!

When an eminent monk of the Shaolin Monastery heard Chen Xi shout those words, he also instantly recognized it and cried out,
"It's really Taiji!"

A lot of people did not believe it!

They simply could not believe it!

"Impossible!"

"Taiji was lost long ago!"

"It's impossible for someone to know it!"

"Right, it's impossible!"

"It doesn't make sense for someone to know it!"

"Then why are those masters so sure?"

"Yeah, why are they so certain?"

A deputy leader of the Kongtong Sect said with a sunken expression, "Over a hundred years ago, a martial arts expert suddenly appeared out of nowhere and used Taiji Fist to defeat the top experts of the Eight Trigrams, Xingyi, Shaolin, Wudang, Kunlun, Kongtong, Huashan, and 18 other martial sects that practiced external and internal martial arts styles. No one could stop him. But then the war started and the martial arts expert was never heard from again. Taiji Fist simply disappeared from this world. From then on, no other disciples or successors to Taiji Fist appeared. In the many books and records that we still have, only those words that were spoken by that Taiji Fist expert all those years were recorded. They're also the only clue our modern martial arts world has left of this legendary Chinese martial arts style. I believe that the records of many of the large sects would have this piece of history written in them!"

Quite a few of those from the large sects started asking questions.

"What words?"

"Yeah, what words exactly?"

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen looked over!

The disciples from the Eight Trigrams School looked over!

Many of the experts from the large and small sects looked over in unison!

That Kongtong Sect deputy leader said pensively, "'Taiji Fist' says to 'use your mind to move energy. You must get the energy to sink. It is then able to collect in your bones. Use energy to move your body. You must get the energy to flow smoothly. Your body can then easily obey your mind. If you can raise your spirit, you will be without worry of being slow or weighed down. Thus it is said: "Your whole body will be nimble and your headtop will be pulled up as if suspended." Your mind must perform alternations nimbly, and then you will have the qualities of roundness and liveliness. Thus it is said that you are to "pay attention to the alternation of empty and full." When issuing power, you must sink and relax, concentrating it in one direction. Your posture must be straight and comfortable, bracing in all directions. Move energy as though through a winding-path pearl, penetrating even the smallest nook, meaning the energy is everywhere in the body. Wield power like tempered steel, so strong there is nothing tough enough to stand up against it. The shape is like a falcon capturing a rabbit. The dynamic is like a cat pouncing on a mouse. In stillness, be like a mountain, and in movement, be like a river. Store power like drawing a bow. Issue power like loosing an arrow. Within curving, seek to be straightening. Store and then issue. Power comes from

your spine. Step according to your body's changes. To gather is to release and to release is to gather. Disconnect but stay connected. In the back and forth (of your arms), there must be folding. In the advance and retreat (of your feet), there must be variation. Extreme softness begets extreme hardness. Your ability to be nimble lies in your ability to breath."

The members of the Chinese martial arts world present were getting more and more astonished from hearing that!

Use your mind to move energy?

Use the energy to move your body?

To gather is to release?

To release is to gather?

W-Wasn't that the set of fighting techniques "Chen Zhen" had just employed!

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were dumbfounded when they heard that!

Xu Fan was flabbergasted. "Did that Chen Zhen really use Taiji Fist?"

Zhao Yunlong let out a curse. "What the fuck!"

Song Jiao said, "How can he know!?"

Lu Yuhu, Yan Hui, and Chenchen were even more dumbstruck. They were the only people at the venue who knew of "Chen Zhen's" real identity, so it added even more disbelief!

Everyone was stunned at this revelation. This mental shock was even more shocking than when Chen Zhen had revealed that he could use concealed power!

Because this was not just any other martial art!

It was the Taiji Fist!

This was the legendary martial art that had disappeared for over a hundred years!

This was the martial arts that had beaten the entire Chinese martial arts world until no worthy opponents remained!

Even Zhou Tianpeng who was currently fighting in the ring got distracted. When Chen Xi and he heard the words "Taiji Fist," their confidence was visibly shaken!

Even Rao Aimin was so shocked that she gasped and shouted, "Rascal, is that the truth?"

Zhang Ye said calmly, "What do you think?"

Rao Aimin said, "How do you know Taiji Fist?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "I've always known it."

Rao Aimin replied, "Then why didn't you tell me, you rascal!"

"I've told you before!" Zhang Ye was rather speechless at her reaction. "When you asked me back then, I told you that I knew Taiji Fist, but you said that I was bullshitting!"

"Who the hell would know that you really meant it!" Rao Aimin countered.

Zhang Ye said, "Now you know."

When everyone heard "Chen Zhen" admitting this himself, they all gasped one after another. To them, and even to the entire Chinese martial arts world, this revelation was simply unbelievable. Just saying the Taiji Fist had reappeared in the martial arts community again was enough to send shockwaves throughout the entire community!

Why did Taiji Fist make a reappearance in this world?

Why did it have to be at this time of all times?

The Huashan Sect leader, Chen Xi, felt as though he had been slapped in the face. He had just made a speech at the National Martial Arts Conference using the story of Taiji Fist as an example to get his point across for not letting the Zhou Family Style follow in its footsteps. He said that they should not allow such precious intangible cultural assets to slip from their hands and be lost, thus using it as an excuse to attack Rao Aimin for the greater good of the Chinese martial arts world. But not soon after, just ten minutes later, a non-affiliate who knew Taiji Fist had appeared in the ring!

How face-smacking!

And it was really amazing!

So the legends of the Taiji Fist that had shocked the entire martial arts community before were not just legends!

It was no wonder Chen Xi could not do any harm to his opponent even though he was obviously more skilled than him. So it turned out that his opponent was a practitioner of this style of martial arts!

In the audience, Song Jiao could not longer hold it in. She seized Lu Yuhu. "Spit it out! Who on earth is that person?"

Xu Fan was also bursting with curiosity. "Little Junior Bro! Don't you know him? Hurry up and tell us!"

"A Taiji Fist master who has trained to use concealed power?

This..." A slightly older disciple of the Eight Trigrams Palm said, "Are any opponents below the level of grandmaster worthy of him? Even if his opponent were a grandmaster, he might still stand a chance of defeating them! The theory of Taiji Fist in and of itself was already meant to be used to curb a stronger opponent, using only a small amount of effort to push away something much heavier!"

"Little Junior Bro!"

"Hurry up and tell us!"

Song Jiao said, "Because of Eldest Senior Sis's terrible social ties, her reputation in our martial arts world is in tatters. Who wouldn't avoid her if they could? So how did Eldest Senior Sis come to know such a powerful friend?"

Lu Yuhu was anxiously wiping sweat off himself. "Because..."

Xu Fan said, "Because of what?"

Lu Yuhu gave a wry smile. "Because that guy's social ties are even worse than our Eldest Senior Sis's!"

Yan Hui who was beside them couldn't agree more.

"Ah?" Song Jiao was stunned.

Zhao Yunlong was also stunned. "There's someone who has a worse reputation than Eldest Senior Sis?"

Around them, the disciples from the large and small sects, as well as the non-affiliates, could no longer hold it in either!

"Who is he!"

"Who the fuck can tell us who that is!"

"A non-affiliate?"

"How can such an expert not be affiliated with any of the martial sects!"

"After a lapse of more than a hundred years, the successor of Taiji is finally willing to show himself again?"

"I have a feeling that the martial arts community will be plunged into chaos soon!"

"Just who can he be?"

"Eh, hold up!"

"What's the matter?"

"He's familiar, he looks really familiar!"

"Ah, now that you mention it, I think so too!"

"Aiyo, why do I, too, find him quite familiar now? Like I've seen him somewhere before?"

Liu Yiquan, Liu Yizhang, and the others who had been traveling together with Zhang Ye were startled. If no one had mentioned that he looked familiar, they wouldn't have thought along that line. Now that they looked at him, this person truly looked familiar to them as well!

They had definitely seen him before!

They had definitely seen him somewhere before!

Finally, Chen Xi said something in the ring!

"After more than a hundred years, I've finally had the honor to see for myself this generation's successor of the Taiji Fist." Chen Xi then made a slight fist and palm salute according to the Chinese martial arts world's traditions. "Chen Xi, of [Huashan's Five Way Boxing](#)." This was a form of respect to the opponent, as well as to the legendary martial art of the Taiji Fist.

Zhang Ye looked up at him and slowly lifted his hand to his sunglasses. He rested his hand on them for a moment before taking them off!

Instantly, the entire hilltop fell utterly silent!

Chen Xi was shocked!

Zhou Tianpeng was also shocked where he was standing!

Liu Yiquan was dumbfounded!

He Badao stunned!

Song Jiao was stunned!

Everyone was stunned!

They heard the young man standing in the ring say in a plain manner, "Zhang Ye, of the Taiji Fist."

[Huaquan](#)

Chapter 936: The shit stirring duo!

When they saw this person.

When they saw his face.

When they heard his words.

At the venue, countless people's expressions turned to extreme excitement in an instant!

"Wha-What did he say?"

"He said—Zhang Ye, of the Taiji Fist!"

"Zhang what?"

"Zhang Ye."

"What Ye?"

"Zhang Ye."

"What Zhang?"

"—Go away!"

A lot of people short-circuited for a moment!

"Non-affiliate Chen Zhen" had just taken off his sunglasses and was immediately recognized by the spectators. Even though these martial artists did not usually pay attention to entertainment news and celebrities as they wouldn't possibly be sitting in front of their TVs every day to get ready to watch The Voice of China, it was impossible for most of them to not recognize this person standing before them. Because this person was famous nationwide! Even if they did not watch The Voice, they would still watch TV at times, right? Or had watched the Brain Gold commercial before? Or read the newspapers before? Or watched the news on TV before? Or watched Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala before? Or played Plants vs. Zombies before? Or had heard about the incident where a Korean celebrity got beaten up? Or heard their friends use those classic catchphrases for scolding people before? Or, when worst came to worst, they surely would have heard about that airplane hijacking incident that caused a sensation across the country, right? As long as they knew about any of those aforementioned examples, they would surely know him. This guy's notoriety was incredibly well-known throughout the country! At most, some of them might be a little unfamiliar with him, but they definitely knew of him!

Liu Yiquan called out, "It's Zhang Ye!"

He Badao said, thrilled, "Goddamn!"

A female non-affiliate stuttered, "Teacher, Teacher Zhang?"

"What's going on?" the Eight Trigrams School's Song Jiao exclaimed.

Xu Fan exclaimed along with her, "Little Junior Bro, just what is going on here?"

Lu Yuhu said with resentment, "I don't know why Teacher Zhang is here today either! Actually, during this time when Eldest Senior Sis was away from Beijing, it was Teacher Zhang who had been taking care Chencheng."

Only Yan Hui who was standing together with the Eight Trigrams School looked very accepting of the situation.

Zhao Yunlong noticed. "Bro Yan, you recognized him early on?"

"That's right." Yan Hui gave a wry smile. "Back during the airplane hijacking incident, I fought alongside Teacher Zhang Ye. We worked together to defeat the terrorists, so I'm a little more familiar with him." Though he said that, Yan Hui had actually recognized him considerably late. It was only when Zhang Ye had entered the ring that he managed to recognize him, but that wasn't because Yan Hui was not alert, nor was it due to him not paying attention to the news as part of the Chinese martial arts community. It was simply because he had not thought along that line at all!

Zhang Ye?

A celebrity?

An A-list celebrity in the domestic entertainment industry?

He actually turned out to be the successor of the Taiji Fist that had been lost for over a hundred years?

In the ring, it was clear from Chen Xi's expression that he knew Zhang Ye as well. "Why is it you!?"

Zhang Ye laughed. "Why can't it be me?"

Outside the ring, a South Wudang disciple shouted, "It just cannot be you!"

At the venue, there were indeed quite a number of people who had watched Zhang Ye's latest film. Everyone here was still quite interested in a martial arts flick like that. In that movie, they clearly remembered the moves that Zhang Ye executed as the villainous Taiji Fist grandmaster. It could easily be described as dogshit, as none of the moves were logical or made any sense at all. Back then, a lot of these martial artists would often bring it up as an after-meal subject and mock that multimillion-RMB film. It was just so unprofessional and was purely done for the onscreen effects. Even they could single-handedly take on at least five of those so-called Taiji Fist experts who appeared in the movie! But when they found out about Zhang Ye's true identity here, today, that he was the actual successor to the legendary Taiji Fist, every one of them could sense a grass mud horse galloping across their vision. And behind this lead grass mud horse, there were another

10,000 grass mud horses surging toward it!

Deception!

What a goddamn deception!

You were obviously the Taiji successor and had even mastered the usage of concealed power! But you being the only successor of this legendary martial arts in this world, and as a Chinese martial arts expert, how could you be so shameless as to use some dogshit, fake-ass Taiji Fist moves to deceive the audience? Deceive the film buffs?

Fuck, do you have a conscience, you?!

Fuck, do you have any shame, you?!

If the Taiji grandmaster from over a hundred years ago were still alive, he would surely be driven to the grave by you!

You were faking all those moves!

Outside the ring, the Zhou Family Style's Fourth Bro Zhou roared angrily, "Isn't your name Chen Zhen?!"

"When one is away from home, doesn't one go by several aliases?" Zhang Ye was unabashed, unashamed, and unembarrassed.

Someone from the Huashan Sect said, "But on the deathmatch agreement, you signed off as 'Chen Zhen'! This is cheating! How can you still be considered a martial hero if you behave this way? How can you be considered a member of the martial arts community?"

Zhang Ye looked at that person below the ring and boldly asserted, "Listen up, bro! I studied broadcasting in university, and my main profession is hosting. My side jobs involve me producing TV shows, performing crosstalks, writing calligraphy, composing poems, or if I go a little further, doing some mathematical research, or if I go even further, would bring me to guest starring in a movie!" Pausing, Zhang Ye smiled coldly at that person. "Who the hell is a member of your martial arts community?"

That Huashan Sect disciple was at a loss for words!

When everyone else heard this, they were also unable to snap back!

"I didn't have time to bother with you people earlier, but you're trying to cast doubt on me now? Even bringing up the martial arts community to me? And being a hero?" Zhang Ye looked at those people from the large sects and said, "Two grandmasters of our martial arts world laying a trap and working on the inside with the National Martial Arts Association. The large sects colluding together and marching into battle as one. All of this just to deal with a single female comrade? Do you people need your fucking honor! Don't try to talk to me about whatever rules of the martial arts community. Zhou Tianpeng already made the first move several years ago by interrupting a fight and causing the loss of two

lives. So what justification do you people have? Weren't you people damn insistent on making sure that Old Rao didn't leave this place alive? The National Martial Arts Association, who should have presided over this case as judge, has also joined the fuck in to muddy the truth and assist in doing evil? Just tell me, what sort of a martial arts community is this? Is this what you call being heroes? Is this what a grandmaster is like? Fuck you people! The entertainment industry is a much cleaner place than here!"

The Eight Trigrams School's Song Jiao cheered, "Well said!"

Xu Fan also said excitedly, "Teacher Zhang! Beautifully said!"

Zhao Yunlong cursed, "These bastards! Not a single one of them is a good person! Bullying our Eldest Senior Sis just because she stands alone? Even setting a trap by calling for a deathmatch? Ha! I bet none of you could have expected our Eldest Senior Sis to have backup!"

Lu Yuhu clenched his fist and exclaimed, "Teacher Zhang, thank you!"

"Right, Master Zhang, all of us fellow disciples of the Eight Trigrams School will forever remember your grace!"

"Thank you for today!"

"Thank the heavens you came here today!"

"Thank you for your great kindness, Teacher Zhang!"

"Your supreme grace and kindness will be returned someday!"

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples knew that if it weren't for Zhang Ye being here today, their Eldest Senior Sis would definitely have stood no chance of winning! But now, that situation had been completely reversed! Their Eldest Senior Sister and a martial arts expert who practiced Taiji were fighting together in this deathmatch. It seemed like their chances of winning were increasing by the moment!

Rao Aimin said as she fought, "Why are you guys thanking him? This rascal still owes me rent!"

Zhang Ye said, a bit speechless, "Didn't you say that you would waive it?"

"Did I ever say so?"

"Yes, you did. You even said that you would leave the apartments to me."

"Hur hur."

Right at this moment, Zhou Tianpeng was unable to dodge an attack and received a blow from Rao Aimin's palm. He was struck so hard that sweat flew from his forehead!

Disciples from the Zhou Family Style School and many of the large sects looked gloomy!

Shit!

This is bad!

Judging from the way that Zhang fellow had spoken with Treacherous Rao, their relationship was not just simply knowing each other; it was clearly much deeper than that!

After engaging in some banter, Zhang Ye said to those in the audience, "To all my fellow colleagues of our martial arts world, you come from large and small sects. There's also those who are not affiliated with any sects, but everyone is an adult and should know right from wrong, and understand what is good and evil. If any of you still have a shred of conscience and dignity left, touch your chest and ask yourselves this: Is it really necessary to align yourselves to this sort of martial arts association? If Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi are willing to hide the truth to deal with Old Rao this way, one of you might get handled this way some other day! Is there even any meaning for a bullshit association like this one to exist anymore? Are they worth pledging your allegiance to in a war?"

A lot of those from the small sects and the non-affiliates went quiet. Zhang Ye's words had motivated them into contemplation.

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen shouted, "You better watch your

words! Are you slandering the National Martial Arts Association? You have to answer to the law for that!" He had blurted this out!

But Zhang Ye shot right back at him, "You're talking about the law with me? Why didn't any of you bring up the law when Zhou Tianpeng killed two people? Instead, why were you using the rules of the martial arts community when you talked of him causing their deaths? Do you even know what the goddamn law is, you! Slander? Sue me then! Oh, but I think you don't know that I have recently gained a license to practice law!"

Fan Wen was literally choked back by his own words!

The Iron Palm's Master Sun said, "It was Rao Aimin who broke the rules first!"

A high-ranking monk of the Shaolin Monastery said, "Today's dispute has nothing at all to do with your Taiji branch of martial arts. Almsgiver, please stand down and not commit a mistake here!"

Zhang Ye laughed heartily. "Nothing to do with me? Then what the fuck has it got anything to do with your Huashan Sect, Iron Palm, and Shaolin Monastery? Did Old Rao beat up your mother or your father? Why are you people bouncing around here? Stop trying to bullshit me! Your martial arts are not good, yet all of you are here taking sides and forming cliques and blowing hot air! Blowing hot air in front of me? Do you people know what I do for a living? You wish to debate me? Sure, let's decide on the topic then! Arguing or what? I can stand alone against several hundred of you at once! If I can't beat all of you, I will take on your family names!

Shall we try?"

The large sects' disciples were shaken by Zhang Ye's shamelessness!

Yet no one came forward to debate him! This was a proper martial arts conference. Who the hell would want to argue with you over something like that! Of course, the most critical factor was that they knew in their heart of hearts that when it came to arguing, absolutely none of them were his match. This was what he did for a living in the first place! Besides, they had witnessed for themselves the power of Zhang Ye's eloquence at the resort's restaurant last night! It was truly a representation of words being able to revive the dead! Looking at those wounded and limping people wrapped in bandages in attendance today, and then thinking back on yesterday, they realized that all this was the fucking consequence of Zhang Ye's words, which kickstarted it all. Before the Martial Arts Conference was even convened, their forces were almost totally wiped out!

Other than him, who else in the world could achieve something like that?

What sort of talent was that?

What sort of a mouth was that!?

They had finally seen for themselves just how much of a hooligan Zhang Ye was. He was as terrible as the news and the Internet had described him! It was little wonder that he and Rao Aimin knew

each other, and even had so much in common. Fundamentally, these two people walked more or less the same path. Rao Aimin was a shit stirrer of the Chinese martial arts world, while Zhang Ye was a shit stirrer of the entertainment industry. If these two were not friends, then who would be friends?

Today, these two notorious shit stirrers of their respective fields were standing together to face their enemies!

So ask yourself, who in the entire world could match these two terrible hooligans!?

Chapter 937: Zhang Ye's speed!

A deathmatch whose outcome was decided from the start, a perfect trap that had been carefully laid out by the two grandmasters along with the various large sects of the martial arts community—this entire plan was now thrown into disarray by Zhang Ye's appearance!

"Grandmaster Zhou is in danger!"

"This is bad!"

"What should we do?"

"Master!"

"Martial Uncle, be careful!"

"Zhang Ye, you fucking meddler!"

"You bastard!"

In the ring, Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi knew that they were approaching a critical moment in the deathmatch!

"Old Chen! Why are you still talking so much nonsense with him!" Zhou Tianpeng was already injured. "Take him out!"

Chen Xi clenched his teeth. "Alright!"

Zhou Tianpeng could no longer retreat any further and unexpectedly changed to a different set of fighting techniques. It was extremely vicious and do-or-die, giving up most of its defenses in exchange for killing blows!

The deathmatch had finally reached the concluding stage of desperation, the instant between life and death!

Chen Xi also went for it. He was no longer as cautious as before, launching a thunderous attack with Huashan's Five Way Boxing techniques. Like a violent storm, he charged at Zhang Ye with heavy killing intent, as if a changed man!

A low punch!

A cutting fist!

A high punch!

Zhang Ye took them straight on, raising his hands to meet the punches as they came, and countered the attack's momentum by shifting his center of gravity to negate his opponent's first punches into nothingness!

Deflect!

Yank!

Push!

The more he fought, the more lucid it became for him. In his mind, a voice kept echoing:

If the opponent takes no action, you take no action.

But once he takes even the slightest action, you have already acted.

Zhang Ye lowered his shoulder and followed through to do a Taiji pushing hand technique!

Power seems relaxed but not relaxed, about to expand but not yet expanding. When my power finishes, my intent of it continues. First in your mind, then in your body. Your abdomen relaxes and then energy collects in your bones. Spirit comfortable, body calm—at every moment be mindful of this. If one part moves, every part moves, and if one part is still, every part is still. As the movement leads back and forth, energy stays near the back and gathers in the spine. Inwardly bolster the spirit and outwardly show ease. Step like a cat and move energy as if drawing silk. Throughout your body, your mind should be on your spirit rather than on the energy, for if you are fixated on the energy, your movement will become sluggish. Whenever your mind is on the energy, there will be no power, whereas if you ignore the energy and let it take care of itself, there will be pure strength. The energy

is like a wheel and your waist is like an axle.

The eight energies of Taiji!

Four taels yield a thousand catties!

With a muted crash, both Zhang Ye and Chen Xi were sent flying backwards!

"Grandmaster Chen!"

"Sect Leader!"

"Master!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Zhang Ye!"

Outside the ring, many people were crying out!

Zhang Ye clearly suffered a greater injury and flew over two meters backward, landing heavily on the floor. Meanwhile, Chen Xi, whose martial arts were better, logically should have not been affected much. Yet he was still injured due to Zhang Ye's counterattack, which was dealt after judging Chen Xi's concealed power with his "[listening power](#)", causing them both to take

injuries and fly backward. He fell and sprawled out in the ring!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen gasped, "Th-This is what Taiji Fist is?"

How legendary!

This was really too domineering!

Chen Xi carp skipped up with a dark expression and returned to his feet. "Watch this move!" He came charging in for another attack. I'll take your life while you're in strife!

Zhang Ye could feel his organs churning inside of him, but took a deep breath to quickly steady himself. He braced a hand on the floor and pushed himself back up. "Right on time!"

The two of them once again started exchanging blows!

A moment later, they were back at forcing each other into retreat!

Chen Xi went back two steps!

Zhang Ye went back four!

Before he could even really catch his breath, Chen Xi was rushing

straight for him again. A killing blow imbued with concealed power was headed straight for Zhang Ye's abdomen. Those standing near enough could even hear the whistling of the wind as the attack was delivered!

Zhang Ye blocked again. He kept some concealed power within his palm strike and went for Chen Xi's wrists, pushing his hands downward. But Chen Xi burst out with a yell and forcefully held them up by using his shoulders to push upward, turning this into a test of strength! Zhang Ye could no longer avoid him, since Rao Aimin was only several steps behind him at this point. He couldn't retreat anymore even if he wanted to. In these dire circumstances, he took to using a very well-known Taiji Fist technique at an extremely close distance—[neutralizing power](#)!

As their movements were too quick, the spectators could not even clearly see what was happening. Zhang Ye fell backwards, while Chen Xi fell on his sides, only not falling all the way to the floor as he put his hands on the floor to support himself!

Chen Xi coughed lightly!

Zhang Ye was the more seriously injured one judging by how pale his face had turned!

The exchanges were all-out blows. The two of them expended a lot of energy doing so. Concealed power wasn't actually some kind of internal skill or internal strength like what you see in wuxia novels and the like. To put it plainly, it was just the potential that one could achieve after pushing one's body beyond its physical limits. Due to differences in the practicing of internal styles and qi

flow techniques, the concealed power achieved would be different as well. Chen Xi's concealed power was more vicious, while Zhang Ye's Taiji concealed power was softer and more tenacious. Also, concealed power was not infinite but limited by one's stamina instead. Under continuous attacks, not even a grandmaster could keep it up for long, much less peak martial arts masters!

Chen Xi was visibly panting a little, but when he looked at Zhang Ye, he found that he was only panting as much as himself. Incredibly, he did not look like he had weakened at all!

How was this possible?

He could hang in there for this long?

Chen Xi's expression sunk even more. He could never have expected that his opponent would have such great stamina. Even if he was young, this shouldn't be possible! Of course, he couldn't possibly know that this was due to the effect of those 1,000 Fruits of Stamina. That Zhang Ye was able to continuously hold him off, and even injure him, was not purely down to his skill with Taiji Fist. The 3,000 Fruits of Strength, Stamina, and Agility had a large part to play in all of this!

Rao Aimin suddenly asked, "Are you doing OK?"

Zhang Ye clenched his teeth. "No problems!"

If only he had a few more Reputation Points!

If he could have eaten another 1,000 Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books? Or another 2,000 books? Or he could even have tried to get some Stats Category Fruits in the game ring's Lottery Draw (Two) to see if it could further help him break through his limits of strength and stamina. The Lottery Draw (One)'s Stats Category Fruits had already reached their limit. There would be no effects even if he ate more of them. He had yet to try out the improved version of the lottery draw in regards to this, but logically, he should be able to get even better!

However, he didn't have many Reputation Points left anymore. Moreover, Zhang Ye had also achieved what he set out to do today. He wasn't here to determine who was better against a grandmaster anyway. He only needed to help Rao Aimin hold him off!

The most important characters in the ring were Rao Aimin and Zhou Tianpeng!

As for the outcome of the match, it depended on these two people's duel!

"President Zhou!"

"Grandmaster Zhou!"

"Master, watch out!"

Suddenly, a scream rang out!

The deathmatch was finally going to be decided!

Zhou Tianpeng made a flailing attack and missed, then Rao Aimin dealt a palm strike straight to his face! Zhou Tianpeng started bleeding from his nose and mouth, then took several unwitting steps backward. But his feet were clearly stumbling, and he was obviously hit so hard that he was concussed. He briefly lost consciousness!

His defeat was decided!

"Old Zhou!" Chen Xi was so anxious that he was fuming and wanted to rush over!

But Zhang Ye blocked him!

Chen Xi roared, "Move aside!"

Zhang Ye said, "I won't fucking move aside!"

Song Jiao yelled, "Eldest Senior Sis!"

Xu Fan shouted, "Terminate that Old Crook Zhou!"

Lu Yuhu also yelled angrily, "A life for a life! Kill him!"

This was clearly not something that an experienced policeman would usually say. But since the Chinese martial arts world had its own set of traditional rules, for any duels that occurred or any deathmatch that took place here, there had not been any known cases of police reports even when someone had died. Even though the martial arts community was no longer the same as in the past, the same rules still applied!

In a deathmatch, life and death would be determined by fate!

Rao Aimin stepped forward and raised her palm!

At this moment, everyone at the venue held their breath!

"Ah!"

"Master!"

"Dodge!"

But suddenly, a twist of events arose!

From the direction of the large sects, two swishes suddenly broke the silence and traveled in the direction of the dueling ring!

Many people were stunned by this!

Even those from the large sects were stunned!

Lu Yuhu raged, "They're darts!"

Xu Fan shouted hoarsely, "Eldest Senior Sis, watch out!"

Song Jiao yelled, "Scumbag! Motherfucker!"

Who was it?

Who threw the darts as a sneak attack?

But there was no time to ask these questions!

The darts were too quick. Even before the screams and shouts of the Eight Trigrams School's disciples had faded, two blinding spots of lights were already flying into the dueling ring. Steady! Precise! Vicious!

Rao Aimin was standing perpendicular to the path of the incoming darts!

While Zhang Ye had his back facing away from the large sects outside the ring!

When he heard the words "sneak attack," Zhang Ye's sweat glands exploded! His first reaction was to go to where Rao Aimin

was, but the instant Zhang Ye turned around, he discovered that the two darts were actually coming straight for him! One was headed for his forehead! The other was aimed at someplace slightly below his chest!

This was bad!

Zhang Ye was instantly angered! At this moment, the effects of those 1,000 Fruits of Agility showcased their powers. He clearly had his back facing the attack, and his face was only one meter away from one of the darts when he turned his head, but Zhang Ye somehow immediately figured out the trajectory of the darts as he crooked his head quickly to the right as the dart swooshed straight past him, brushing against several strands of hair on his head!

A lot of the people were dumbfounded by this!

Because...because that was simply too quick!

Was he still human?

Even a grandmaster might not be able to react like that!

[listening power](#)

[neutralizing](#)

Chapter 938: A single man guards the pass!

He dodged one!

But could not avoid the other dart!

It wasn't that he couldn't react in time. In fact, he could see it more clearly than anyone else, but his body just couldn't catch up to his thoughts and reaction. His center of gravity at this moment was off-kilter and there was no way to avoid it. He could only watch as the second dart made its way toward his chest!

Liu Yiquan shouted, "Bro Chen!"

Chenchen screamed, "Zhang Ye!"

I'm done for!

Zhang Ye could only think of one thing now. He wondered if the 1-Up item in his game ring's inventory would be of any use! If he were to die here, then would that 1-Up item be activated automatically or not?

Everyone thought that Zhang Ye would die for sure!

But the next second, a hand that shouldn't have appeared there suddenly flashed across the front of Zhang Ye's chest. That beautiful hand of a woman was so quick that it moved with an

afterimage like it was gliding through time. It traveled at a speed that no normal person could imagine. The audience could only see a blur!

Ding!

That second dart was caught by that hand between the fingers!

The people below the ring created an uproar!

Everyone was stunned!

It was Rao Aimin!

It turned out that Rao Aimin had managed to catch the dart in the nick of time!

From this angle, in such circumstances, even Zhang Ye the intended target could only avoid the first dart. That had already made many people stare and drop their jaws. It was a reaction speed that even a grandmaster could not hope to achieve. But the second dart was still too much for him, yet who could have expected that Rao Aimin, who was a few steps away from Zhang Ye just a moment ago, would somehow manage with her out-of-this-world skills to backpedal and reach out to catch the flying dart!

Rao Aimin!

So this was that female grandmaster of the Chinese martial arts world who would send a shiver down anyone's spine, even if just from hearing her name?

Between the grandmasters, could there possibly be such a big gap between their skill?

A lot of the large sect's people had thought before the conference that even if Rao Aimin were powerful, she would only be slightly better than Grandmaster Zhou and Grandmaster Chen. It shouldn't have been a great difference at all. But when they witnessed this scene now, everyone finally understood why Rao Aimin was able to single-handedly challenge the two grandmasters all those years ago, even managing to seriously injure one of them! The difference in martial arts skill between the three grandmasters—Rao Aimin, Zhou Tianpeng, and Chen Xi—was definitely not just a little bit!

Lu Yuhu shouted, "Senior Sis!"

Zhang Ye looked astonished. "Why the hell did you save me!"

It wasn't that he was ungrateful. But right at this moment, Huashan's Five Way Boxing technique was unleashed on Rao Aimin without warning, brushing past Zhang Ye as he stood there! When he was trying to avoid that first dart, Zhang Ye exhausted all of his strength and lost his balance. As a result, he simply could not react to this attack as Chen Xi finally slipped past him, having made this decision after a slight hesitation when he saw the dart flying toward them. If he did not grab hold of this opportunity, both he and Zhou Tianpeng probably weren't going to leave this

place alive!

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

"Despicable!"

"Bastard!"

"Chen Xi, you motherfucker!"

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were infuriated!

Chen Xi was faced with an internal struggle. As the vice president of the National Martial Arts Association and as a grandmaster, he still had his pride and cared about his status as well. But with everything turning out this way, he could only resort to this now. There was no other choice!

Plunk!

It was the muffled sound of a punch meeting the flesh!

Chen Xi had furiously thrown a punch filled with concealed power at Rao Aimin's shoulder!

To save Zhang Ye, Rao Aimin had exposed all of her openings while trying to catch the dart. She was practically defenseless at

this moment and had no chance to avoid this punch. With the concealed power released, her entire body shook!

"Senior Sis!"

"Old Rao!"

Shrieks rang out!

But this was not the end!

Behind Rao Aimin, Zhou Tianpeng who had earlier been struck into concussion also made use of these two seconds to recover a bit. Although he was seriously injured now, when he saw Rao Aimin receiving a strong punch from his old friend Chen Xi, he still reflexively took action! Zhou Tianpeng did not struggle with his decision, nor did he have any hesitation. He instantly attacked her with the Zhou Family Style's 21st Form, the Crushing Punch!

"Old Crook Zhou!"

"How dare you!"

Yet another plunk sounded!

Zhou Tianpeng was slightly more skilled than Chen Xi, and even with his state of injuries, he could still muster up a lot of concealed power. With that punch, he had expended all of it and unleashed a

deep strike on the center of Rao Aimin's back!

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

Rao Aimin trembled!

Many of the non-affiliates below the ring were breaking out in cold sweats from watching!

"This..."

"Rao Aimin is done for!"

"The female grandmaster of our generation is...done for!"

Meanwhile, many of the large sect's people showed looks of surprise!

"We won!"

"Master has won!"

One of the Eight Trigrams School's female disciples burst into tears. "Eldest Senior Sis!"

But before the voices faded, everyone turned aghast!

They saw that the pale and trembling Rao Aimin was still standing. Not only that, she narrowed her eyes and raised her palm in front of the terrified Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi!

She struck her palm downwards!

Thump! Chen Xi was completely unprepared for this. He had not expected that Rao Aimin would still be able to make another attack and took the hit directly, spewing out a mouthful of blood!

Zhou Tianpeng was greatly shocked by this and could not dodge in time!

With a low yell, Rao Aimin suddenly used a burst of concealed power to repel the power of the palm strike that Zhou Tianpeng had landed on her back. When Zhou Tianpeng stumbled backward a few steps, Rao Aimin turned and executed an Eight Trigrams Palm move, raising her hand up, but did not strike immediately. Instead, she raised it higher before suddenly attacking with a downward that looked neither fast nor slow, slapping Zhou Tianpeng behind his neck. From the looks of it, this strike did not seem powerful. It looked like how friends slapped each other's back as a greeting!

However, Zhou Tianpeng's expression changed drastically!

Crick!

Crack!

The creaking of bones snapping gradually sounded!

From the neck down to the back!

From the back down to the waist!

Zhou Tianpeng cried out and spat out a mouthful of blood, before immediately collapsing to the ground!

In just a few short blows, Chen Xi fainted from his injuries, while Zhou Tianpeng's survival was unknown!

The entire venue went quiet!

Not a sound could be heard!

No one said anything!

They saw Rao Aimin look down at the still conscious Zhou Tianpeng with her eyes drooping and tell him in a slightly hoarse voice, "I've finally avenged my younger sister and brother-in-law's deaths today. From now on, don't you even dare think of taking up martial arts again, or getting out of your bed to walk about. Just lay in bed and enjoy a life of being provided for. In another half a year, get someone to organize your funeral for you. Oh wait, I doubt you have half a year left to do that since you have so many

enemies around."

Many of the Zhou Family Style School's disciples leaped into the ring!

"Master!"

"Sect Leader!"

"Master!"

Some of them started crying!

Others were shouting desperately for help!

After he heard Rao Aimin speak her piece, Zhou Tianpeng opened his mouth and viciously tried to say something, but couldn't muster up a voice at all. With that, he immediately blacked out!

The Huashan Sect's disciples rushed over in panic to Chen Xi's side, avoiding Rao Aimin as they ran past her!

"Martial Uncle!"

"Senior Bro!"

"Wake up! Wake up!"

Fan Wen flusteredly checked Chen Xi's pulse and found that it was very weak. He realized that his senior brother was suffering from very serious injuries. The look on Fan Wen's face became even more unpleasant!

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples were instantly elated!

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

Zhang Ye cursed, "Fuck your grandpa! Who threw those darts just now?" He could not take this lying down and wanted to take immediate action against the perpetrator!

Rao Aimin suddenly glanced at Zhang Ye and said weakly, "Let's go."

"Ah?" Zhang Ye was taken aback.

"Down the hill." Rao Aimin looked wan.

Zhang Ye returned to his senses. "OK!"

Rao Aimin took very slow steps, and left the ring in front of Zhang Ye. She walked in the direction of the Eight Trigrams School's disciples.

When the members of the large sect who were in her way saw her, they panicked and hurried to the side to avoid her. Their fearful expressions when they saw her made it seem like they needed to stand at least several hundred meters away from her to feel safe!

There were too many unexpected events in today's deathmatch. The emergence of the Taiji successor; a sneak attack from out of the ring; Rao Aimin's amazingly powerful martial arts. It wasn't so bad for Grandmaster Chen, even though he was rather heavily injured. He would likely make a recovery after several months of rest. But for Zhou Tianpeng...Everyone who was present today knew full well that from this day forward, there would only be four grandmasters left in the Chinese martial arts world! In today's battle of the grandmasters, Zhou Tianpeng had been stripped of his title!

Rao Aimin slowly walked over.

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples excitedly came over to congratulate her!

"Senior Sis!"

"You've finally avenged them!"

"That last strike of your palm was executed with perfection!"

Chenchen also came up to her. "Auntie!"

But it was right at this moment that Rao Aimin suddenly stopped in her tracks. She did not say anything and just fell forward without any warning!

Beside her, Zhang Ye caught her and held her upright. "Old Rao!"

"Senior Sis!"

"Eldest Senior Sis!"

Rao Aimin passed out!

Only at this point did the Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples realize that those two attacks by Chen Xi and Zhou Tianpeng were imbued with concealed power as well. Their Eldest Senior Sister had only forced herself to remain standing, but was in actual fact already suffering from internal injuries!

This was seen by everyone as it happened!

The large sects were startled!

Suddenly, someone shouted!

"Rao Aimin can't hold out any longer!"

"Treacherous Rao has fainted!"

"We cannot allow her to leave!"

"Right, we can't let them leave!"

"If they are allowed to go today, all of the sects that have denounced her would never have another day of peace!"

"Grandmaster Zhou has been maimed! Rao Aimin is capable of anything! If we allow her the chance to make a full recovery, none of us will be able to get away!"

"Avenge Grandmaster Zhou!"

"They only have a little more than a dozen people! We have several hundred! Rao Aimin can't fight anymore! There's nothing to be afraid of! Everyone, let's get them! Exterminate Treacherous Rao! Everyone has a duty to do so!"

"We cannot allow the tigress to return to the mountains!"

"Right, the tigress must not be allowed back into the mountains!"

With some of the martial sects' members leading, a furor rippled through the rest!

Fan Wen, who was helping Chen Xi up in the fight ring, looked over at the Eight Trigrams School, then breathed in and said to a disciple of his next to him, "Take care of the Sect Leader!"

The Iron Palm's Master Sun clenched his fists and took a step forward.

When several of the Shaolin monks saw this, they sighed and walked over slowly as well.

Ten people!

Fifty people!

A hundred people!

The large sects gathered an army of people!

Seeing the turn of events, the people of the Eight Trigrams School were bitterly disappointed!

Song Jiao pointed at them and shouted, "Respectable martial sects? Is this what respectable martial sects are like these days? The fighters signed the deathmatch agreement! Some of you even played dirty and interfered with the match in the ring! Using darts

as a sneak attack! But now that you've lost, you're thinking of surrounding and attacking us? What sort of large sects are these? What sort of a National Martial Arts Association is this!?"

Xu Fan said, "Fuck all of your ancestors!"

Zhao Yunlong was already picking up a weapon. "Let's fight it out with them!"

"Right!"

"Let's fight it out with them!"

"They're pushing us too far! Is there any justice?"

"When Zhou Tianpeng killed two people, they called it a normal duel in our martial arts world. When our Eldest Senior Sis injured Old Crook Zhou, the National Martial Arts Association comes hunting for us and wants to exterminate all of us? What kind of logic is that? Just what kind of logic is that?"

"Little Junior Bro! Take Eldest Senior Sis and leave immediately!"

"Right, Little Junior Bro, your martial arts are the weakest among us. You won't be of much help here. Just take Eldest Senior Sis and Chenchen and get out of here!"

"I'm not leaving!"

"Go already!"

The people from the large sects were approaching!

The non-affiliates and those from the small sects were rather startled by what they were seeing. They had not expected that the large sects and people from the National Martial Arts Association would actually handle the matter this way. This, this...was not something that any of them were willing to intervene in, because there were too many people from the large sects who were much more skilled than them. Further, their party consisted of the Shaolin eminent monks, the Huashan Sect's Fan Wen, the Kunlun Sect's leader, the Iron Palm's Master Sun, and so on and so forth, all of whom were masters at their respective martial arts styles. This was something that they had utterly no say in!

At this moment, Zhang Ye suddenly spoke.

Zhang Ye handed Rao Aimin over to Song Jiao. "Carry her."

Song Jiao was taken aback. "You..."

Zhang Ye gestured to them and said, "Get going!"

Lu Yuhu was stunned. "Teacher Zhang!"

"Take Old Rao and Chenchen down the hill and get out of here!"

Zhang Ye regulated his breathing a few times and stood there in front of them, blocking the only pathway down the hill. "I'll hold them off for a while."

Yan Hui was getting anxious. "But you're injured too!"

Zhang Ye said, "I can still hold them off."

Xu Fan said, "They have over a hundred people! Even if you're a grandmaster, you can't stop them!"

Zhang Ye raised his voice. "Hurry up and get going! I have my own ways! Otherwise, none of us will stand a chance of getting away!"

"Zhang Ye! Let's go together!" Chenchen said loudly.

Zhang Ye smiled. "All of you, leave first. I'll be right behind you."

Lu Yuhu decided on the spot and grit his teeth. "We can't delay any longer! Let's go!" He then picked up Chenchen. "Teacher Zhang! Please take care!"

Song Jiao's eyes reddened as she carried Rao Aimin on her back and started running with all her might. "Let's go!"

Xu Fan stomped his feet and followed them!

Chenchen was screaming like mad, "Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye!"

Lu Yuhu's tears were almost falling, but he tightly held Chenchen and did not let go. He put her on his shoulders and ran down the hill at full speed!

Yan Hui struggled with himself for a bit and did not move!

Zhang Ye shouted, "Old Yan! Hurry up and go!"

Yan Hui clenched his teeth so tightly that he almost crushed them. Finally, he turned around and chased after the Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples!

Soon, only Zhang Ye was left standing at this pathway that led downhill!

Chapter 939: Ten thousand men pass out!

At the top of the hill!

A lone person stood at the pathway leading downhill!

The people from the large sects had rushed over and were closing in!

"Charge!"

"Capture Rao Aimin!"

"Revenge for Grandmaster Zhou!"

The pounding of numerous feet and deafening shouts could be heard clearly!

Zhang Ye had blocked off the only pathway leading down the hill. Without any more worries, he started smiling. The injuries he'd sustained during the battle with Chen Xi were getting more and more serious and he could feel his vital organs throbbing with pain. He coughed as though the more than a hundred people across from him did not exist. Then he adjusted the button on his collar before leisurely lowering his head to tighten his shoelaces. He picked up a long forked branch that was at hand and had fallen from a tree. Under the suspicious gaze of everyone, Zhang Ye straightened up before drawing a line in front of him with the forked branch. The branch scratched against the ground, making

squeaking noises.

The people from the large sects were stunned.

What the hell?

What was he doing?

One meter...

Three meters...

Five meters...

Before long, Zhang Ye had marked a five-meter line in front of him.

Zhang Ye dusted off his dirty hands and threw aside the forked branch. He looked up at the dense crowd of large sect members and declared coldly, "Whomsoever crosses the line shall die!"

He said so in an extremely firm tone!

There was no hesitation in it!

Whomsoever crosses the line—dies!

A single declaration from him scared the mob of over a hundred people standing across him into shock!

Everyone who was about to break through where Zhang Ye was standing guard, suddenly stopped in their tracks in fear when they heard those words. No one knew why they had stopped because they did so instinctively. They were all stunned by the resolute tone of Zhang Ye's voice!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen said somberly, "Get out of the way!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "And what if I don't?"

The Kongtong Sect deputy leader was holding a weapon and staring at him. "Do you think that you can stop a hundred of us by yourself?"

"Feel free to try me," Zhang Ye said calmly.

An elder disciple of the Iron Palm Sect said fiercely, "Rao Aimin has enraged the masses and made an enemy of our martial arts world. Since it has come to this, why are you still trying to be a hero? How many people can you stop with just you alone? Ten? Twenty? Or thirty? Not to mention, you're seriously injured. But even if you weren't, you couldn't stop us! Even if Rao Aimin were standing here unaffected by injuries, she couldn't stop all of us! Do you really think that you're superhuman!"

"Right!"

"He's injured!"

"He already at his limit!"

"Everyone, don't be afraid!"

"Let's attack together! There's no way he can stop us!"

"Don't be afraid of him! We have a ton of people on our side!"

"He can't fight anymore! Grandmaster Chen seriously injured him!"

"He's at the end of his rope!"

With some interested parties shouting, everyone's morale rose once again. Right, Grandmaster Chen and Zhang Ye were both injured in the deathmatch earlier, but Zhang Ye was clearly the more severely injured one since he came under quite a lot of attacks from Grandmaster Chen. How could he possibly hold out any further?

Just when everyone was intending to pile forward!

Zhang Ye's next words shook everyone's morale again!

Zhang Ye started to laugh. "Do you really think that I can't fight when I'm injured? Alright then." His toe rubbed the ground where the line had been drawn. "Let's see any of you try to cross this line."

Quite a lot of the large sects' disciples looked at one another.

The Iron Palm's Master Sun also had some hesitation as he sized Zhang Ye up, as though trying to make out how seriously injured he was and how much more he could handle!

Zhang Ye challenged, "Come over!"

The other side was silent!

Zhang Ye shouted again, "Hurry up!"

The other side remained silent!

The more he said that, the more the large sects could not tell what he was up to and turned hesitant instead. That sentence "Whomsoever crosses the line shall die!" was like a sword hanging over their heads. No one had the courage to be the first to try! After all, the opponent was a martial arts master who was even the successor to the Taiji Fist! He was at the pinnacle now that Grandmaster Zhou had been stripped off his skills, Grandmaster Chen was unconscious, and Rao Aimin being severely injured. Nobody present at the National Martial Arts Conference was a

match for him!

Master Sun asked, "Old Fan, how many attacks can you take him for?"

"...I don't know," Fan Wen said with a dark expression.

The Kunlun Sect's leader said, "What are our chances if some of us teamed up together?"

Eldest Bro Zhou of the Zhou Family Style School said, "We'd have to see how determined he is! If Zhang Ye really wants to fight with all his might and defend the pathway that goes downhill so that Rao Aimin and the others can have a chance to get away, then... people will definitely die today! And it will not be just a few! There might be...a lot of people dying!"

A lot people will die?

These words silenced many of the large sects' leaders and heads!

Fourth Bro Zhou said anxiously, "But he's already seriously injured!"

"What if his injuries are not that serious?" a Shaolin monk brought up.

An old man from the Qingcheng Sect asked, "So what are we

going to do?"

"Hurry up and decide, Sect Leader!" South Wudang's deputy leader also spoke up. "Rao Aimin and the others are getting away! If we don't give chase now, it will be too late!"

"Yes, we must definitely chase them!"

"Let's all attack together! We can just pile up on him and crush him to death!"

But right at this moment, Zhang Ye spoke again. "None of you are going to attack, right? Alright then, I'll attack first!" As soon as he finished, he took a large stride forward.

Everyone was startled and took a step backward in unison!

What?

You even want to make the first move?

C-Can you really still fight?

Zhang Ye walked over slowly and said coldly, "The feud that Old Rao had with Zhou Tianpeng is settled, but not mine. I still intend to settle the score for what happened today. First off, who threw those two darts into the fight ring? Own up now, or do you want me to seek you out? Second, the deathmatch has already ended. I

have always thought that the martial arts community would have martial righteousness, but all of you have widened my horizons today and allowed me to clearly see just what kind of people you all are. Those who know me will know that I've always been a vengeful guy! You think that I will just let the matter rest like that? You're even playing dirty with me?" He suddenly shouted in anger, "Motherfuckers! Then I'll fucking play with you guys today!"

"Charge!"

"What's he to be afraid of!"

"He's only one person! Just one person!!"

"Kill him!"

Someone in the crowd led the clamoring!

The Kunlun Sect's leader was also enraged by Zhang Ye. "You really think that we're afraid of you? We'll attack then! I would like to see just how many of us you can stop!"

Zhang Ye looked at the Kunlun Sect's leader and laughed. "Then I'll let you find out. If any one of you can make it downhill and still stay standing, I'll take your surname!"

What?

No one can reach the bottom of the hill and still stay standing?

Those words were really fucking domineering!

The small sects and non-affiliates who were standing far away suddenly felt their blood coursing with excitement!

Liu Yiquan clenched his fist and said, "Zhang Ye is going all-out!"

He Badao said in astonishment, "H-He must already be prepared to not make it down to the bottom of the hill alive!"

Liu Yizhang's eyes reddened. "He was prepared to not go back alive the moment he chose to stay behind! To save Rao Aimin and the people of the Eight Trigrams School, he prepared to go all-out!"

A female non-affiliate said anxiously, "Teacher Zhang!"

Li Quanneng roared, "What sort of righteous sects are they? They're just a bunch of low-class thugs! Teacher Zhang is the real man! He's the fucking hero of my heart!"

The large sects surged forward, but many of the disciples were still looking rather unwilling to do so. Seeing Zhang Ye's insane behavior, they felt intimidated!

Zhang Ye showed no fear and gave a cold smile. "There will definitely be casualties today. Since this is the final battle, I'll need

to take a bathroom break. You people can understand that, right?"

He can still joke around at this time?

Seeing this, the small sects and non-affiliates were even more impressed!

This is what you call a real hero!

This is what you call a heroic man!

The people from the large sects did not say a word.

Zhang Ye did not wait for their reply and headed straight for the unsophisticated bathroom not too far away. He went inside while whistling a tune.

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen said, "Split the party in half and have them pursue Rao Aimin!"

But at this moment, Zhang Ye's voice came from the bathroom. "Whomsoever crosses the line—dies!"

A big group of the large sects' disciples were about to rush down the hill, but retraced their steps in a daze. Even though Zhang Ye was in the bathroom at this moment, they still couldn't help feeling terrified. They were afraid that if they had really crossed the line, they would be killed straight away! Perhaps this was

would one would call having an imposing aura!

Eldest Bro Zhou of the Zhou Family Style School looked at his frightened juniors. "Good-for-nothings!"

Master Sun said a bit guiltily, "From the looks of it, Zhang Ye should still have a backup plan! He might hidden some his strength earlier. If we split up and a group of us head downhill first, we might not be able to deal with him!"

"What could he be planning?"

"I don't know!"

"How can he be so confident taking us on. Is he thinking of perishing together with all of us?"

"Could it be that he has already reached grandmaster level?"

"Impossible!"

"Even if he is a grandmaster, he can't stop this many of us!"

10 seconds...

20 seconds...

In the blink of an eye, 30 seconds had passed.

Zhang Ye still did not come out from the bathroom.

Second Bro Zhou asked in puzzlement, "What's going on?"

Master Sun called out, "Zhang Ye!"

The Kunlun Sect's leader said, "Are you done yet?"

No one answered.

"Why isn't there any response?"

"Where is he?"

"Say something!"

"Are you not ready yet?"

They shouted two more times. Still, no one answered. Everyone was simultaneously surprised and bewildered. Immediately, Eldest Bro Zhou of the Zhou Family Style School gathered a number of martial artists and charged into the bathroom together. When they got inside, everyone was stunned!

There was no one inside!

Not a trace of a person!

Zhang Ye had disappeared into thin air!

"Holy shit!"

"Where is he?"

"How did he disappear?"

"Is he in the cubicle?"

"No one is in the cubicle either!"

"What about the death battle?"

"What about not letting anyone reach the bottom of the hill while staying standing?"

"Fuck your grandma! Zhang Ye has escaped!"

"Fuck! Zhang Ye has really escaped!"

Whomsoever crosses the line shall die?

Fuck your third uncle's grandma!

Don't tell me you were simply blustering just now!?

In the end, after the entire bathroom was destroyed by the angry people of the large sects, spilling a pool of urine and feces all over the place, there was still no sign of Zhang Ye!

Escaped?

Zhang Ye escaped?

Liu Yiquan, Li Quanneng, He Badao, and the others were dumbfounded!

Be it the disciples of the large and small sects or the non-affiliates on the hilltop, everyone was dumbfounded!

A disciple of the Huashan Sect cursed angrily, "That cheat!"

A person from the Iron Palm shouted, "How deceitful! That was very deceitful!"

A disciple of the Kunlun Sect could not believe his eyes and said in a stunned manner, "Didn't Zhang Ye say that if there were anyone who could leave the hill and still stay standing, he would take our sect leader's surname?"

When the Kunlun Sect's leader heard that, he got even angrier!

No one understood what was going on.

However, the next thing that the Kunlun Sect's leader said made everyone faint. "Fuck his grandma! M-My surname is Zhang too!"

Everyone collectively fainted on the spot!

Immediately, everyone started cursing and swearing on the hilltop!

"Old Crook Zhang is very deceitful!"

"Despicable!"

"How despicable!"

"Let's quickly give chase!"

"Everyone, quickly chase after them!"

They would never have imagined that there would be such a shameless person in this world!

Life is like a play—anyone can get best actor!

Chapter 940: Let's see who has more people today!

Halfway down the hill.

Everyone from the Eight Trigrams School ran for their lives down the hill. But as they were carrying Rao Aimin, they could not go too fast and were already at their limits. If anyone were to pursue them, they would definitely be unable to escape. At this moment, their hearts were heavy with sadness. Just before they escaped down the small pathway, the last words they heard from Zhang Ye were "whomsoever crosses the line—dies." At that instant, they realized that Zhang Ye intended to take their enemies down with him!

"Teacher Zhang!" Yan Hui's eyes were filled with tears!

A female disciple of the Eight Trigrams School was unable to stop herself from crying. She kept wiping away her tears while saying, "Zhang Ye chose to stay behind so that he could save us! He sacrificed himself because of us!"

Lu Yuhu roared with rage, "I, Lu Yuhu, swear that I will absolutely avenge Teacher Zhang within this lifetime of mine!"

"Right! Avenge Teacher Zhang!"

"We must take revenge for him!"

"We can't allow Teacher Zhang to sacrifice himself for nothing!"

"That bunch of bastards from the large sects! When Eldest Senior Sis has recovered, we must exterminate them all!"

"Exterminate them all! Avenge Teacher Zhang!"

"Revenge or die!"

"Revenge or die!"

The Eight Trigrams Palm's people started shouting rallying cries in grief.

But at this moment, the footsteps of someone running could be heard coming from behind them. A figure was sprinting toward them at a speed that was at least three times faster than their group's pace!

"Ah?"

"Someone is catching up to us?"

"This is not good!"

"Let's run faster!"

"That doesn't feel right. Why does it sound like it's only one person?"

"Who is it?"

The figure was getting closer and closer!

When they saw managed to make out who this person was, the disciples from the Eight Trigrams School were stunned and stood rooted in place!

It turned out that it was Zhang Ye!

"Zhang, Zhang Ye?"

"Teacher Zhang?"

"Damn, how are you still alive?"

"Where are they? Where are the people of the large sects?"

Zhang Ye bellowed as he ran madly for his life, "What do you mean why am I still alive? Let's hurry the fuck out of here! Stop staring! They will be catching up to us soon!"

Lu Yuhu said in a stunned manner, "Weren't you going to sacrifice yourself to stop them from advancing?"

When Zhang Ye heard that, he nearly tumbled to the ground. "I'll sacrifice your sister! Are you cursing me?"

"No, I didn't mean that. I, I..." Lu Yuhu did not know what to say anymore and just asked, "Then where are they? Why aren't they chasing us?"

Zhang Ye replied, "I stopped them!"

Song Jiao, who was carrying Rao Aimin on her back, exclaimed, "How did you manage to stop them? Did you beat them all into the ground?"

Zhao Yunlong was greatly surprised. "Y-You're that amazing? Even our Eldest Senior Sis couldn't do that!"

"What do you mean by beating them all into the ground? There were over a hundred fucking people back there! Do you guys think I'm Iron Man? Even if there were only a third of them, I wouldn't be able to beat them!" Zhang Ye said matter-of-factly.

Xu Fan gaped. "Then how did you stop them?"

Zhang Ye explained, "By using my mouth of course!" Then this fellow even proudly related the happenings back there instead of being ashamed. "Those idiots, they think they can fucking argue with me? I frightened them with just a couple of words!"

Did they really think that I was injured?

Did they really think that I couldn't beat all of them?

Yes, I! Really! Couldn't! Beat! Them!

Those who knew him knew that Zhang Ye was not known for his excellence in martial arts, but for that mouth of his! If he couldn't beat them? Then he would outtalk them!

The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples were extremely astonished as they ran down the hill together with Zhang Ye!

Just you alone? Someone who had been seriously injured? Could rely on your mouth to stall over a hundred martial arts experts, masters, and sect leaders from the large sects?

Fuck!

How could your mouth be so damn powerful!?

Chenchen cried out, flustered and exasperated, "Zhang Ye!"

Zhang Ye was given a fright. "Whoa, why are you shouting so loudly?"

Lu Yuhu gave a wry smile. "The child was frightened just now."

"Here, let me carry her." Zhang Ye took Chenchen from Lu Yuhu's hands. "There, there, your Uncle Zhang is fine. Didn't I tell you all that I would hold them off for a while? I said that I be right behind, how did that turn out to become me sacrificing myself and taking them down with me? Do you guys think that I'm an idiot?"

Song Jiao: "..."

Lu Yuhu: "..."

Xu Fan: "..."

Yan Hui could only think about how he had cried for nothing!

Zhang Ye naturally would not go all-out with those large sects at such a time. As he and Rao Aimin were injured, and Chenchen was also with them, what he needed to do now was not to take revenge, but to recuperate. After Zhang Ye recovered from his injuries, he would settle this score properly with those people one by one. No one was going to escape from that! Therefore, Zhang Ye was just bluffing the entire time when they were on the hilltop. He had thought of an escape plan beforehand and relied on the game ring to do so. This time, he had used the right to activate an item from the Special Category that he obtained a very long time ago. It had performed outstandingly!

Invisibility Effect (Upgraded)!

Zhang Ye had tested this item from the merchant shop before and it was quite awesome, though he had not officially used it. But today, he used up the last of his remaining Reputation Points on it and was able to escape under the watchful eyes of hundreds of people!

Although he had played the lottery draw many times yesterday and purchased about 2,000 Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books today, there was still a tiny amount of Reputation Points left over. On top of that, Zhang Ye was an A-list celebrity and his Reputation Points would constantly increase. For example, if the news mentioned him, or if someone watched A Bite of China, or maybe there was a leak about Zhang Ye being involved with the Central TV Documentary Channel's upcoming documentary on air pollution issues. All of this exposure would give a continuous stream of Reputation Points to Zhang Ye. Although the accumulation per day was not considered much, he still had enough Reputation Points to activate the "Invisibility Effect" for a while and run out of the bathroom!

"How is Old Rao?" Zhang Ye asked.

Irritated, Song Jiao said, "She has internal injuries, so I'm not sure!"

Lu Yuhu said, "We must find a hospital as soon as we get to the bottom of the hill!"

Zhang Ye spoke again. "Call the police first!"

"On our way down, I contacted the local authorities, but I don't know whether that will help much!" Lu Yuhu said with a dark expression, "The National Martial Arts Association is quite influential and have people within the ranks of the relevant authorities! Why else do you think that the deaths that occur every year within our martial arts world never get exposed?"

Suddenly, shouts calling for a massacre could be heard from afar!

"Chase them!"

"Capture Rao Aimin!"

"Kill Zhang Ye, that thieving bastard!"

"Let's catch up to that shameless person!"

"They won't be able to fight back anymore!"

"Don't let them escape! Let's attack together! We have more people anyway!"

"Right, we have more people!"

The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples immediately paled from the shock!

Song Jiao said while panting, "They've almost caught up!"

Zhang Ye decided, "We can't keep running like this. We simply can't outrun them! Since there is still some distance and they haven't spotted us yet, let's hide in the hills!"

"Hide in the hills?"

"I suppose that's the only way out now!"

"Let's hide in the hills first, then find an opportunity to contact someone from the outside world!"

They turned around. At a forked path, they did not run down the stairs but went straight into the forest and deeper into the hills!

"Little Junior Bro, try to contact your friends at the Public Security Bureau again!"

"I've already contacted most of my friends in Beijing!"

"What do we do now?"

"Even if we continue downhill off the beaten path, what if those people waiting for us at the bottom are also from the large sects?"

"No one's ever been caught halfway!"

"They have too many people!"

"Eldest Senior Sis and Teacher Zhang are injured. We won't be able to stop them if we bump into them!"

"The local authorities might not necessarily help us either! The police tend not to concern themselves with the majority of feuds occurring within the martial arts community and the National Martial Arts Association! It's the same everywhere!"

No one knew what to do. They could only run blindly in the hills, but what lay ahead was uncertain!

They had more people?

Comparing who has more people?

Zhang Ye's face darkened. "Where are my clothes?"

Yan Hui was startled. "Ah? I'm wearing them."

This was the down jacket that Zhang Ye threw on the ground back before he went up into the fight ring. It was later picked up by Yan Hui, who was wearing it.

Yan Hui took off the down jacket and passed it back to him.

Zhang Ye felt the pockets of the down jacket and took out his cell phone. When he saw the Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples looking at him in confusion, he said, "I'm posting on Weibo!"

Competing with me on who has more people?

Motherfuckers!

Let's see who has more people today!

Chapter 941: The large sects get annihilated!

In the afternoon.

In the hills.

The group from the Eight Trigrams School was running around like a headless chicken.

"What are you posting on Weibo for?"

"Calling for help of course!"

"H-How can there be any people at such a remote place?"

"I still have to give it a try no matter what. Why is there no signal around here?"

"You can't call on this cell phone anymore, there's no reception!"

"Let's walk around for a bit. Here, signal, signal, signal, where are you?"

After walking for about ten minutes.

Zhang Ye was tapping furiously on the screen of his cell phone. Suddenly, a signal bar appeared when it latched onto a signal that came from an unknown position. The phone immediately connected to the Internet and that Weibo message successfully got posted. But when he wanted to post something more, the signal disappeared again. He kept searching for a signal from the same spot they were at, but to no avail. After a long time, he had to give up.

Alright!

Let's leave everything to fate!

"Ah, Eldest Senior Sis's body feels very hot!"

"She has a fever!"

"Let's rest here for a while, don't walk any further!"

"Where are the large sects' people?"

"I don't hear any commotion from them. It seems like they didn't manage to catch up to us!"

"They definitely know that we are hiding in the hills. It's impossible that the dozen or so of us would not leave any tracks."

"We still need to take a rest no matter what. It's hard to walk any

further!"

The paths in the hill were tedious to hike and there were no staircases to follow. There were just hilly roads everywhere and overhanging precipices and steep cliffs which made it quite dangerous. They found a rock to rest on and quickly placed Rao Aimin down.

Song Jiao quickly asked, "Is there anyone trained in medicine here?"

No one uttered a word.

Zhang Ye took it upon himself and said, "Let me have a look."

Lu Yuhu said in surprise, "You even know medicine?"

"That's great!" Xu Fan said, "Take a quick look at our Eldest Senior Sis!"

Zhao Yunlong said excitedly, "Teacher Zhang is the most dependable!"

Zhang Ye walked over and pressed Rao Aimin on her [philtrum](#) in a very professional manner, but she still didn't come around. Zhang Ye then slowly withdrew his hand.

One second.

Two seconds.

Xu Fan blinked several times. "And then?"

Zhao Yunlong was taken aback and asked, "Why don't you continue to check on her?"

Zhang Ye looked at them and said, "That's all I know."

The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples fainted upon hearing that!

So it turned out that you only knew how to press on the philtrum? Fuck, that's something we know too!

They knew they could not rely on Zhang Ye anymore and had to depend on themselves for ideas. Some of them went to search for medicinal herbs to see if there were any suitable for emergency treatment, while others looked around for food nearby. But in this winter weather, where could they possibly find something to eat? There were not even any unripe fruit around to be found. In the end, Yan Hui took out a piece of chocolate from his pocket to give to Little Chenchen to eat.

Chenchen tugged at Zhang Ye and said, "Zhang Ye, will my auntie die?"

"What are you saying!" Zhang Ye said firmly, "Old Rao will

definitely be fine, there's me around!"

Xu Fan asked Zhang Ye, "What should we do now?"

Zhang Ye said, "Rest for a while first. Then we'll continue to travel downhill!"

Worried, Zhao Yunlong said, "But—"

"No buts. We must quickly find a hospital for Old Rao before the sun sets." Suddenly, Zhang Ye felt a pain in his chest and clutched it as he coughed several times. The coughs sounded like they had come from his lungs.

Yan Hui asked anxiously, "How bad is your injury?"

Zhang Ye gave a wave of his hand and said, "I'll be fine."

Among them, Zhang Ye's martial arts was the best, and coupled with his societal and fighting experience being greater than their group of martial artists, they had unknowingly started to look up to him as their leader. As someone who had stepped forward at a critical juncture and saved all of them, everyone was definitely more than willing to listen and trust in him!

Lu Yuhu said in resentment, "We will have our revenge someday!"

"Have our revenge someday!" Xu Fan also shouted angrily!

Song Jiao wiped the sweat off the unconscious Rao Aimin's forehead. "Eldest Senior Sis, please get well soon! When you've recovered, we'll bring the fight to the large sects' headquarters together!"

All of a sudden, they heard some shouting from where they were!

"Their trail is over here!"

"They went in this direction!"

"Chase them!"

"It's definitely this way!"

"They're carrying an injured person, so they can't have gotten too far!"

The people from the large sects actually caught up to them!

Zhang Ye's expression changed. "Let's go!"

"Move!" Song Jiao carried Rao Aimin piggyback and everyone continued to run!

With nowhere to escape to, they were feeling rather helpless!

How pathetic! Only the word pathetic could be used to describe their current situation!

30 minutes!

1 hour!

It was already past 1 PM. Everyone felt utterly exhausted. But the large sects behind seemed to have an expert tracker who managed to follow closely behind them based on the footprints and trail left behind by their group. The distance between them was getting closer and closer!

"They're going to catch up with us soon!"

"How should we proceed from here?"

"Where should we head?"

"Which path is the way to get off the hill?"

The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples were getting anxious!

Zhang Ye did not know the way either!

At this moment, Chenchen suddenly shouted, "Zhang Ye! Throw a shoe!"

Song Jiao was stunned. "What?"

Xu Fan was also stunned. "Throw a shoe?"

However, Zhang Ye smacked his thigh and said, "That's right! I nearly forgot about that!"

He opened up the game ring and immediately activated the Lucky Halo (Upgraded). Although he did not have many Reputation Points left, he still had enough to keep it activated for a few seconds!

He took off his shoe!

Then he threw it into the air!

The shoe landed on the ground!

Chenchen firmly pointed in the direction the toe tip was facing. "Let's go this way!"

Song Jiao: "..."

Lu Yuhu: "..."

The Eight Trigrams School's disciples: "..."

Fuck, is that reliable or not?

Zhang Ye and Chenchen led them and ran in that direction. "Let's go! What are you guys looking at? This must be the path to get to the bottom of the hill. Trust me!"

Chenchen explained on his behalf, "On the journey from Beijing to here, we found my auntie by using this method! Zhang Ye's shoe is very amazing!"

What?

From Beijing?

You found your way here by throwing a shoe for directions on the journey?

Fuck, are you two serious?

Looking at Zhang Ye, they felt that this fellow's mysteriousness had elevated to yet another level.

It was time to move!

They kept running in that direction down the hill!

Another hour had gone by and they had lost their way again.

Touching Rao Aimin's forehead, it was getting even hotter. Zhang Ye was burning with anxiety by now, and decided that he had to use his last remaining bit of Reputation Points to activate the Lucky Halo again so that he could throw his shoe once more! And so, Zhang Ye's Reputation Points were completely used up. He was left with nothing!

...

Meanwhile.

Elsewhere.

The large sects lost their way as well!

The Huashan Sect's Fan Wen said in annoyance, "Where are they? Is it this direction?"

The Iron Palm's Master Sun said, "They must be over here!"

A disciple of the Zhou Family Style asked, "Is this the path to get down the hill?"

"They are carrying an injured person with them, so why are we still unable to catch up?" a Kongtong Sect member wondered. "We've already been chasing them for almost three hours! It's going to be dark soon!"

One of the Shaolin monks said, "They must have an expert in their group. Whenever we are about to catch them, they always seem to be able to find an alternate route and make us pursue in the wrong direction!"

"Ah!"

"Look, we're almost at the bottom of the hill!"

"The foot of the hill is right in front of us!"

"We're finally here! Once we reach the bottom of the hill, they won't be able to escape anymore!"

"Quick, call the others!"

"There isn't any reception right now, but I called them a bit back!"

"Are they on their way here yet?"

"Another 30 experts from the large sect will be coming!"

"Good! We'll attack them from either flank!"

"Right, we'll block them off from both ends and capture them in one fell swoop!"

"Attack!"

"Charge!"

The large sects thundered as their morale increased greatly!

...

The group from the Eight Trigrams School also spotted the end of the path at this moment. Suddenly, they heard the shouts coming from not too far behind them. It nearly drove them to despair!

"They're catching up to us!"

"We won't be able to get away!"

"What should we do now? What should we do?"

"Ah, there are some people at the bottom of the hill!"

"They've even got pursuers in front of us now?"

"Fuck, let's perish together with them!"

"We'll charge our way out! Blaze through them and leave a bloody path!"

"Charge!"

The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples were getting extremely nervous. They had nowhere left to run and no alternate route to take. They had no choice but to head down the hill with all they had and pray that there would be less people blocking their path at the bottom. In that case, they might still have a glimmer of hope and force their way through! But the moment they reached the bottom of the hill, they were stunned!

People!

There was a sea of people!

They only had one thought now: It's over!

Zhang Ye's heart skipped a beat. Have we nowhere else to run?

The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples looked grief-stricken and angry. They had reached the bottom of the hill, but it still wasn't enough? They could not avoid this crisis? Why? Why?

However, the very next second, several loud screams from the crowd at the bottom of the hill dumbfounded the Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples!

"Heavens!"

"It's Zhang Ye!"

"It's Teacher Zhang!"

"Teacher Zhang is really here!"

The moment when the countless people at the bottom of the hill saw Zhang Ye, it was like they were all injected with adrenaline!

Zhang Ye was taken aback by this and his spine instantly straightened. "Damn! Those are my people!"

What?

They're on our side?

The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples almost cried with joy!

Tourists made up the majority of the crowd. There were men and women, young and old in the group. Among them, there were also the police with their police vehicles, reporters, taxi drivers, and

some local villagers who had brought along more than a dozen of their Tibetan Mastiffs!

There were over two thousand people!

A good two thousand people!

Up on the hill, the large sects were also charging their way down. They had no idea what was happening. When they saw from a distance away that there were people, they thought that it was their side's people. That made them run even harder. Everyone was shouting rallying cries as they did!

"Kill that Old Crook Zhang!"

"Capture Rao Aimin!"

"Take them down!"

"Hahahaha! We've finally caught up to them!"

"Don't be afraid of them! We have more people on our side!"

"Everyone, charge! Everyone—"

Abruptly, the shouting stopped!

The large sects finally saw the dense crowd of innumerable people!

Fan Wen asked dumbfounded, "Eh? Do we even have that many people?"

A person from the Zhou Family Style said stunned, "That's not right. We didn't call for that many people as backup."

Master Sun wondered, "Eh? Why aren't the Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples running anymore?"

After being dumbstruck for a few seconds, they suddenly realized what was going on!

"Holy shit!"

"This is bad!"

"Th-They're not our people!"

A lot of the large sects' people were greatly alarmed and shocked!

Zhang Ye stopped running. Not only did he stop running, he even turned around and walked in the direction of the large sects, cursing loudly, "Motherfuckers! Who was trying to act tough with me just now? I dare you to try acting tough again!"

Looking at the child Zhang Ye was carrying and the unconscious woman piggybacked on someone who was running beside Zhang Ye, the crowd was instantly angered. It was the kind of anger that erupted violently, from deep within their hearts. What they saw truly enraged many of them! A woman? A child? And they were being chased by over a hundred men carrying weapons? In an instant, many of the younger and stronger adults rushed forward at the pursuers. There were even some women, grandfathers, and grandmothers who rushed up the hill angrily!

"Hitting a woman? Fuck you!"

"You even want to abduct a child?"

"These are the crooks that Zhang Ye posted on Weibo!"

"I can't take it anymore!"

"You people are taking it too far! Behaving so lawlessly!"

"Let's follow Teacher Zhang and attack them!"

"Follow Teacher Zhang and catch the crooks!"

"Let's get rid of evil for the people!"

"Beat those bastards to death!"

The crowd was frenzied!

Thousands of people were crying out in anger as they rushed up the hill. Their shouts were deafening!

When the large sects saw this, they were scared silly!

Why?

How could there be so many people?

Only now did they remember who Zhang Ye was. He was a fucking A-list celebrity! His fans could be found all over the country and they numbered in the tens of millions!

Comparing who had more people?

Fuck, who could have more people than him?!

Zhang Ye caught up with some of them. "Come on! Carry on acting tough with me! Let's compare and see who has more people!"

You have a few thousand people with you!

Compare? Compare your sister!

Fan Wen screamed, "Quick, retreat!"

Master Sun scrambled away. "Quick, run! Run!"

2,000 people versus 100 people? Even if the latter group was skilled in martial arts, they still wouldn't be able to take them on since the numerical difference was too great! They would be beaten to pulp from just getting punched by each person in that group!

"Run!"

"Withdraw!"

The large sects fled in panic!

Over a thousand people chased relentlessly after them!

An old granny angrily grabbed a rotten egg and threw it at them. With a crack, it smashed onto the head of a Shaolin eminent monk and the gooey yolk sprayed all over his face. "Baldie! I'll smash you to death!"

That Shaolin monk cried out in pain, but did not dare turn around. He just continued running away while covering his head!

A lot of the surrounding people started throwing things at them!

"Old Taoist, don't you run!"

"Bastards! Beating up a woman and a child?"

Fan Wen was hit right in the back of his head by a thrown apple!

An Iron Palm disciple who tripped and fell was beaten black and blue by more than fifty young and strong adults who had chased after him!

Wails could be heard from those people of the large sects!

Tragic!

Only the word "tragic" could be used to describe the current situation!

The 100 of them were surrounded and attacked by more than 2,000 people. Even a martial arts master would not be able to bear the beating!

The police also took action and chased after them!

The reporters were desperately trying their best to take photos of the free-for-all!

There was even an ambulance that had been urgently dispatched

after Zhang Ye's Weibo was posted. The paramedics hurriedly carried the injured Rao Aimin onto a stretcher and sent her to the hospital for treatment!

But Zhang Ye did not leave yet!

The trio of Lu Yuhu, Xu Fan, and Zhao Yunlong did not leave either!

Lu Yuhu caught up with a Kunlun Sect disciple and gave him a beating immediately!

Zhao Yunlong faced off with a high-ranking senior from the Kongtong Sect. Yunlong's martial arts were actually inferior to his opponent's, but his opponent could not handle Zhang Ye's fans, who rushed up to him. His opponent had to face a dozen of them together! That Kongtong Sect senior did not even have the chance to make a move before being beaten to the ground unconscious. His teeth were even knocked out from the thrashing!

Zhang Ye held a brick-shaped rock that he had gotten ahold of and quickly chased after them, smashing it into whomever he came across!

"Fuck your mother!" He smashed it into a Huashan Sect disciple!

"Fuck your grandfather!" He smashed it on a Shaolin monk!

"Trying to act tough in front of me!?" He caught up to the

Huashan Sect's Fan Wen and also smashed it right into his face!

"Go on and act tough then!" He smashed it on a Kongtong Sect member!

"You want to chase after me? Come on, I'll let you chase!"

Zhang Ye cursed as he smashed. A smash for each target, one shot, one kill!

The large sects had already pursued Zhang Ye and the others for around three or four hours, and adding the mass brawl with the non-affiliates and the small sects at the restaurant last night, many of them were still wounded. How could they outrun an angry mob of well-rested people standing at the bottom of the hill? The furthest that someone made it was about 500 meters away, but that person was quickly caught by a villager's Tibetan Mastiff!

Shrieks rang out everywhere!

The large sects were nearly annihilated!

Philtrum - an acupressure point, the vertical groove running from the bottom of the nose to the upper lip

Chapter 942: Taking it up with the various large sects?

That night.

There were no reports of the fight on the news. This story was discussed heatedly on Weibo instead!

"How is Teacher Zhang?"

"Have the criminals been arrested yet?"

"How's the situation over there? Local bros, say something!"

"Didn't Zhang Ye mention something about women and children being under attack?"

"Relax, everyone! Those criminals have been arrested!"

"We've taught them a lesson, those bastards! We've vented our anger!"

"Right, we don't know who they are either. There were monks among them and some guys wearing Taoist clothing. Over a hundred of them were shouting and itching to kill, but in the end, we totally crushed them! They were beaten up by more than 2,000 of us and sent scurrying with their tails between their legs! And at least a dozen of them were bitten by Tibetan Mastiffs!"

"Hahahaha!"

"Awesome!"

"If I could've rushed over there, I would've taught them a lesson too!"

"But why aren't there any news reports about it?"

"I don't know!"

"What's really going on here? Why did Zhang Ye appear there?"

A lot of people had gone there and the matter was settled. But as for the details of the happenings, those who answered the call did not have a clue. The police and reporters did not say anything either!

This was perhaps the power that the National Martial Arts Association had. Lu Yuhu was right. The National Martial Arts Association had connections in high places everywhere, and objectively, it was impossible to report about some incidents. A fight between several grandmasters from the Chinese martial arts world? Sneak attacks? Two injured and one maimed? And being chased after by a group of people out to kill? There were even people who got killed several years ago? How could they report something like that! If the truth of the matter and happenings were to be revealed, the National Martial Arts Association would

definitely not be allowed to run any longer. It would surely get dissolved! As a result, even if they were not involved with this affair, some of the officials from the National Martial Arts Association would want to cover up the incident at all costs!

The people were ignorant of the events.

But the Chinese martial arts community knew full well of everything.

...

At a small sect.

"Second Senior Bro is back!"

"Second Senior Bro, what happened?"

"I read Weibo. What really happened?"

"Why did Zhang Ye participate in the conference?"

"Hai, don't bring that up. Something disastrous happened at the Martial Arts Conference!"

"Ah?"

"Sit down, all of you. I'll tell you all about it! The large sects have been annihilated this time!"

...

At a training hall.

"What?"

"Zhang Ye is the successor of Taiji?"

"Goddamn!"

"The Taiji Fist that had been missing for over a hundred years has reappeared again?"

"This..."

"He could even hold his own against Grandmaster Chen?"

"Concealed power? How could it be possible that Zhang Ye could achieve concealed power in Taiji Fist?"

...

The Huashan Sect.

"Say that again?"

"The sect leader is seriously injured?"

"Martial Uncle Fan Wen was beaten up by more than a dozen civilians? He was taken away by the police too?"

"How could Rao Aimin possibly be that skilled!"

"Why would Zhang Ye go and help that Old Crook Rao?"

...

The National Martial Arts Association.

"We have to suppress all news of this!"

"Hurry up and do some PR about this!"

"What the hell were Grandmaster Zhou and Grandmaster Chen thinking!"

"There were so many people going after Rao Aimin and they still failed? They were all arrested?"

"Quick, contact the local police! Get them to release our people! What? They can't do that? Why can't they do it?"

"Why did someone conduct a sneak attack during the deathmatch?"

"How bad are Grandmaster Zhou's injuries?"

"He's been stripped of his martial arts? That's a grandmaster we're talking about! He's the vice president of our National Martial Arts Association!"

...

The outside world was still in the dark about the news, but to those who were from the martial arts world, this was no secret at all. A lot of the martial sects and their disciples who did not participate at the Martial Arts Conference venue soon found out about the situation and were in shock! Too many things had happened at the National Martial Arts Conference this time, and every one of those events were more shocking than the last!

That shit stirrer of the entertainment industry had stirred his way into the Chinese martial arts world!

The successor of Taiji had appeared!

Zhang Ye and Rao Aimin versus Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi!

A sneak attack from below the ring!

Zhou Tianpeng stripped of his martial arts!

Chen Xi seriously injured!

Rao Aimin's survival unknown!

People of the large sects went against their moral principles to seek extermination of the opponent after the duel!

2,000 civilians and a dozen Tibetan Mastiffs annihilated all of those from the large sects!

When they heard this news, many people from the Chinese martial arts world fainted over and over again. In the many years of its existence, the Chinese martial arts world had never had something so disastrous happen before. The most recent incident before this was Rao Aimin's fierce duel against the two grandmasters. Who could have imagined that when nothing happened, all was peaceful; but when something happened, it was as big and shocking as this! It could even be said that all the incidents in the past 50 years of the Chinese martial arts world added together would be incomparable to the mess that occurred during the whole of today!

"Our martial arts world has been plunged into chaos!"

"Yeah, something really big has happened!"

"What will happen now?"

"How will the National Martial Arts Association handle this?"

"Will the large sects still continue to hunt down Rao Aimin?"

"Hunt down Rao Aimin? Zhou Tianpeng has been maimed and Chen Xi is seriously injured as well, so the question is: What will happen after Rao Aimin recovers from her injuries? Will she start hunting down these people from the large sects instead?!"

"Let's see how this will develop then!"

"Yeah, it's a fight between the gods. We should stay as far away from it as possible!"

On this night, every person in the Chinese martial arts world was paying close attention to the developments of the event. Everyone knew that with this big affair happening, the ramifications had yet to conclude!

...

At the place in question.

In a hospital.

Zhang Ye took a phone call in the corridor.

Zhang Ye said: "Mom, I'm fine."

His mother said: "Why did you get into a fight with others again? And it's even a real, physical fight this time? Where's Chenchen? How is she?"

"Chenchen's fine."

"You troublemaker! If I knew this would happen, I would never have allowed you to bring Chenchen with you!"

"Anyway, just let Dad know that I'm safe."

"When will you come back?"

"Me? Um, several days later, I guess."

"Isn't the problem already settled? Why are you coming home several days later?"

Zhang Ye replied: "There are still some issues that haven't been settled yet."

After hanging up, many of Zhang Ye's friends and colleagues also called him to find out what had happened. They had all seen Zhang Ye's Weibo post from earlier in the day.

Zhang Ye said: "Director Yan, I might have to take a longer break this time."

Central TV Documentary Channel's Yan Tianfei said: "I'm fine with extending your break, rest as long as you'd like. But why are you always getting into trouble everywhere you go? I'm very worried about you!"

His friends were all very worried for him, but Zhang Ye did not explain anything to them. Even if he did, it was pointless. The incidents that happened within the martial arts community could only be resolved with the martial arts community's methods!

He went back into the ward and realized that there were a few more people who had just come in.

"Teacher Zhang is back!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

"This is our Eldest and Second Senior Bro!"

"They've just arrived!"

Song Jiao, Lu Yuhu, and the others introduced them.

Zhang Ye looked at the two of them. They were not old, not older than Rao Aimin at least. One of them was pretty ugly and had a buzzcut. The other had a ponytail and looked like someone who was involved in music or the arts.

When they saw Zhang Ye, the Eight Trigrams School's eldest senior brother immediately stepped forward and gave a fist and palm salute. Then he bowed for a long time. "Master Zhang, please accept my respects!"

"We arrived too late!" The second senior brother also did the same when he saw his senior brother bow.

Zhang Ye quickly went over to stop them. "What age are we living in now? Please don't do such things. Come, stand up straight! My relationship with Big Sis Rao is no worse than yours, so it's only right that I help her out. There's no need to be so polite!" He then looked at Lu Yuhu. "How are Old Rao's injuries? Will she recover?"

Old Rao?

The Eight Trigrams School's eldest and second senior brother's eyelids twitched.

What the fuck, someone actually dared to address their eldest senior sister in this way?

Lu Yuhu immediately said, "It's nothing serious. With Eldest Senior Sis's skills, she'll definitely pull through. The doctor said that as long as she regains consciousness, her life won't be in any danger!"

Zhang Ye asked, "Has her fever gone down yet?"

"It's better now," Song Jiao answered.

Their eldest senior brother clenched his fists and said, "Those people have gone too far!"

Xu Fan said angrily, "They did not even report this event in the news! There was no mention of it at all!"

Zhao Yunlong also choked out with anger, "The national martial arts world is also staying silent about this affair and those people from the large sects are all pretending that they don't know a thing. Meanwhile, those from the small sects are too scared utter their opinions. I really want to ask about this right now! Will anyone give us a proper explanation about this issue?"

Lu Yuhu yelled, "Right, who can give us a proper explanation?"

They had been through too much today and were angered by all that had happened. There had been too much scheming and injustice. Even though Zhang Ye had managed to call on those common folk and turn things around, and given a heavy beating to

the people of the large sects, but it was still not enough to vent their anger! They just couldn't swallow it! Getting surrounded? Sneak attacks? Getting hunted down? This was a deep hatred that stemmed from them being targeted for annihilation. Even if those people had been arrested, so what? Besides, the National Martial Arts Association might still make use of their connections with the authorities and get those people released after a few days of detention. Moreover, those large sects likely had their own connections with people within the ranks of the authorities too!

Shaolin?

Or Huashan?

Each of them had better connections than the other!

Therefore this case was definitely not closed. They needed an explanation!

It was at this moment that Lu Yuhu received a call.

At the same time, the various martial sects and non-affiliates of the Chinese martial arts world received the news!

The National Martial Arts Association had finally spoken up after the incident and had expressed outrage at the events that took place during the National Martial Arts Conference. They listed out several actions to be taken. First, they would do their best to find out which person had carried out the sneak attack and make sure

they gave a fair answer to the people affected. Second, they expressed a harsh condemnation of the incident in which people from the large sects hunted down Rao Aimin after the deathmatch. This was disgraceful behavior against the morals and rules of the martial arts community, and they would be taking disciplinary action against the various martial sects involved in the incident. Third, they also expressed their understanding of why all of the events had occurred. The downfall of a grandmaster was something that no one wanted to witness, and this was something that would definitely enrage anyone. Even though it was a deathmatch, the National Martial Arts Association had never advocated this as a way of resolving feuds in the martial arts community. For Rao Aimin to have taken such drastic actions against her opponents, it was also in defiance of the rules. Therefore, it was understandable that those actions had triggered the emotions and sympathy of the people from the large sects!

Putting into context the three points.

The attitude of the National Martial Arts Association was clear. They had pointed out the problems with both sides and blamed the incident on both parties. Thus, the affair was concluded with no concrete results and the association's stand was that this would be the end of it!

The non-affiliates and those from the small sects were abuzz.

"That's how they're going to wrap it up?"

"Uh..."

"Is this considered resolved?"

"It does look like a fair judgment, but why doesn't it feel right!"

"Shh, don't say any more."

"It's not something we can poke our noses into!"

When a lot of the people from the large sects learned of this outcome, they were subconsciously relieved.

"It's finally been settled!"

"This is great!"

"Yeah, it was Rao Aimin who went too far in the first place!"

"Both sides should just take a step back and forget it!"

"Yeah, this outcome is something that I can accept!"

But even though they could accept this, the disciples of the Eight Trigrams School could not!

Not only could they not accept it, the Eight Trigrams Palm's

disciples nearly exploded with anger when they learned of the National Martial Arts Association's stand on this incident!

Lu Yuhu said angrily, "What do they mean by they will do their best to find out which person carried out the sneak attack? There were so many people at the venue at that time, so there must have been quite a few people from the large sects who saw the person throwing the darts. What's there to investigate? Just ask around and the truth will be revealed! They don't intend to hand anyone over!"

Xu Fan said, "Our Eldest Senior Sis was even blamed for the incident?"

"Fuck!" Zhao Yunlong said, "What kind of explanation was that?"

Song Jiao said, "To put it bluntly, the National Martial Arts Association are just made up of people from the large sects! Their people are all in there! So how can we depend on them to hand over the perpetrator? Or expect them to carry out any investigations?"

"They're just trying to sweep it under the carpet?"

"How can it be so simple!"

"Then who'll give us our explanation?"

"Are they just going to forget about the incident in which the

large sects surrounded us and carried out a sneak attack against us?"

The Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples were enraged!

A nurse came in from outside the room and said, "Please be quiet. Don't disturb the patients!"

Suddenly, Zhang Ye spoke up. He looked at that female nurse and asked, "Comrade nurse, do you have a map around here?"

The female nurse said with a hint of excitement, "Yes, yes, we do. What kind of a map do you need, Teacher Zhang? We have everything here. Could I please take a picture with you later?"

"Sure," Zhang Ye said. "I would like a map of the entire country."

Soon after, the female nurse brought the things over to Zhang Ye.

The disciples of the Eight Trigrams Palm looked at Zhang Ye. They did not understand what he was trying to do.

Then, Zhang Ye spread the map out across the table and handed a pen to Lu Yuhu.

Lu Yuhu was taken aback. "What's this for?"

Zhang Ye said calmly, "Do you remember all those sects who surrounded and tried to hunt us down?"

"I won't forget even if they turn to ash!" Lu Yuhu said.

Zhang Ye nodded. "Alright, mark out the exact locations and address of their martial sects' headquarters for me!"

"Ah?"

"What are you planning?"

"Why do you need their addresses?"

"Teacher Zhang! You..."

Everyone was stunned!

However, Zhang Ye spoke very nonchalantly and even smiled, "I'll find a place to heal up for a few days. When I recover, I'd like to travel around to their stomping grounds and have a taste of the lands of our homeland!"

The Shaolin Monastery?

The Huashan Sect?

The Zhou Family Style School?

The Kongtong Sect?

The Kunlun Sect?

South Wudang?

The Iron Palm?

Good!

I'm going to look up each and every one of you!

Chapter 943: Attacking Shaolin!

Five days later.

[Mount Song](#).

The Shaolin Monastery.

This was not a tourist area. The mountain was located in a separate area from the tourist spots. In the main hall's backyard, a group of young monks were holding brooms and sweeping the floor.

"Are Martial Uncle Jie Jiao and Jie Zao back yet?"

"They just came back yesterday. I heard they got some fractures!"

"Yes, they were badly injured!"

"It's a miracle they managed to get back. I heard that they were only released and did not get into much trouble after the abbot pressured the local authorities in Tianshan. The National Martial Arts Association helped out too. Otherwise, they might have even gotten sentenced for that day's happenings. We live in a lawful society now, after all."

"How did it end up like this?"

"That Rao Aimin had been committing all kinds of evil. It was time to teach her a lesson!"

"Shh, don't speak carelessly. Others might hear you."

"So what if I said that. I'm just speaking the truth!"

"This issue is more or less resolved anyway."

"What do you mean 'resolved'? Aren't we going to take revenge for what has happened? Our martial uncles were beaten up too!"

"I heard that we were in the wrong first."

"Still, they shouldn't have been so cruel!"

"We'll settle those scores at a later time for sure. Has Rao Aimin come around yet?"

"I heard that she's still unconscious at the hospital!"

"Hmph, I hope she never wakes up! And that Zhang Ye too! Even the Eight Trigrams School's leader does not dare to have an opinion on this issue and announced that Rao Aimin would be expelled from the school a while ago, so why did a celebrity like Zhang Ye bring himself into the picture? So what if he's a celebrity? Does being a celebrity give him the right to poke his nose into other people's business? Why doesn't he..."

Suddenly, the bell in the mountains pealed!

When they heard the first ring, everyone still looked normal and went about doing what they were doing. But when the bell pealed five straight times, the Shaolin Monastery monks' expressions all changed!

An enemy attack!

It was an enemy attack!

Everyone came rushing out!

"What happened?"

"What is going on?"

"Why are we under attack?"

"The bell of Shaolin hasn't rung five times in a row in decades!"

"What has happened?"

"How can there be anyone who dares to come up into Shaolin and cause trouble!"

Some of the people were panicking!

Some of them were looking confused!

And there were some who quickly picked up their staves, ready to take on the enemy!

Suddenly, an angry roar from a warrior monk came from outside. "Zhang Ye is here! Zhang Ye is attacking us! Quick, go and get the Martial Granduncle!"

What?

Zhang Ye?

The successor to the Taiji Fist that had been lost for over a hundred years?

"This is bad!"

"It's him?"

"Hurry up and call the Martial Granduncle!"

"Defend! Defend the grounds!"

"Get into formation!"

Before they even saw him, they heard him say, "Since the National Martial Arts Association cannot give me a satisfactory explanation? And the Shaolin Monastery cannot give me a satisfactory explanation? Then I'm gonna force out a satisfactory explanation!"

Thump!

Thump!

Two muffled sounds and two warrior monks flew into the front yard with a scream!

Zhang Ye had changed into pure white training clothes today and was wearing a pair of normal canvas shoes. He strolled into the premises of the Shaolin Monastery!

The monks who did not know much martial arts had been sweeping the floor and gossiping earlier. But now, they were scared out of their wits and scampered away.

"Zhang Ye, what do you want?"

"The nerve!"

"You dare attack Shaolin?"

"How bold of you!"

"Have you gone crazy?"

The Eighteen Arhats formation was set up!

Quite a few [Buddhist monks](#) were raging at Zhang Ye from a distance away!

Everyone was very surprised at this, as after five days of peace and quiet, they had thought the worst was over. No one had expected that someone would actually bring the fight to the Shaolin Monastery!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I've always had this much courage. Most issues only have two choices for me: I either handle them or I don't bother with them at all. There has never been an issue of whether I dare or not!" He raised his foot and started to walk in.

"Charge!"

"Stop him!"

"Don't let him get into the main hall!"

"Block him!"

The eighteen warrior monks formed into the Eighteen Arhats formation and swarmed Zhang Ye!

However, Zhang Ye did not even look at them. His eyes were already set on a hundreds of years old plaque inside the main hall. Slowly, step by step, he made his way in!

A staff attack flew in!

Zhang Ye moved his hand with a twist and a snap!

A warrior monk fell to the ground crying in pain!

Right after, the afterimages of two staves whistled past, one in the front of Zhang Ye, the other behind him!

Zhang Ye did not look back. He raised a hand to use his index and middle fingers to pinch the staff attacking from in front. With a flick of his wrist, the staff held by the warrior monk in front of him shook violently and the monk lost his grip. Zhang Ye then gathered up a bit of concealed power and pushed the staff forward, hitting the warrior monk right in the chest, which sent him flying. Zhang Ye immediately twisted his fingers and flung the staff held between his fingers behind himself, straight into the face of the warrior monk standing behind him. That monk was also sent flying, with a bloody nose, and passed out from the pain!

Yet another monk attacked Zhang Ye with a staff, the afterimages sweeping his lower body!

Zhang Ye did not try to dodge. He just stepped on it with one foot. The tip of the staff was pressed down onto the ground, and with a shudder, that warrior monk was also sent flying!

The Eighteen Arhats formation was reduced to only fourteen people in the blink of an eye!

The monks of the Shaolin Monastery felt their blood run cold!

They were not a match for their opponent!

There was no way to fight him!

"Don't be afraid of him!"

"Beat him up!"

"Charge!"

"We'll stop him even if we have to die!"

"Let's charge at him together!"

There were a total of 28 people who could fight. All of the warrior monks present attacked together at once!

Zhang Ye made use of his "listening power" and used both hands to stop a barrage of punches from two warrior monks. Deflecting, he threw both monks to the ground. It was as though they had no control over their bodies anymore, but also as though they had been sent sprawling to the ground by the same force they had exerted in their attacks, resulting in them smashing their heads!

A warrior monk who practiced hard qigong roared and attacked in a berserk fury!

But the moment he arrived in front of Zhang Ye, before he could even see what Zhang Ye's move was, all he saw was the sway of an afterimage hitting his body's center of gravity. Afterwards, his entire person was thrown to the side, never to get up again!

"Master!"

"Assistant Instructor!"

"Assistant Instructor!"

The assistant instructor of the Shaolin Monastery's warrior monks couldn't even stand up to one strike from Zhang Ye!

There was no way they could fight him!

What was the point of fighting anymore?

Although the martial arts of these Shaolin Monastery warrior monks was very good, and each one was even picked out of a hundred others, their opponent right now was someone who was an expert in Taiji Fist. This expert had also fully recovered from his injuries and was young and strong, a martial arts master at his peak! Unless there were between 100 and 200 people attacking him at once, there was no way they could deal with him!

Five people!

Ten people!

Twenty people!

In the blink of an eye, all of them were on the ground!

A few people who had participated in the National Martial Arts Conference five days ago were once again surprised by Zhang Ye's kung fu. This was because Zhang Ye had obviously just recovered from his injuries, yet his martial arts had gotten better than before—of course what they couldn't know was that in the past few days, as long as he had accumulated 1 million Reputation Points, Zhang Ye would immediately purchase a Taiji Fist Skill Experience Book and "eat" it up!

"We can't do it anymore!"

"We're unable to hold him off any longer!"

Quick, get the Martial Granduncle!"

"Where is the Martial Granduncle?"

...

In the inner courtyard.

In some room.

The eminent monks of the Shaolin Monastery, including the abbot, were all gathered here. They did not even bother going outside in the face of this crisis. There were all kinds of expressions on their faces.

The abbot was silent!

An eminent monk looked anguished!

A Buddhist monk looked fretful!

And in the corner sat a monk who seemed to be the center of focus right now. But he did not say a word. This person was very old, but still looked to be very healthy. He wore only the most simple and common gray robes meant for the lowest level disciples, and had a head full of hair, all of which made him stand out. He might have been ordained as a monk before, or perhaps he had grown out his hair later on. But it was quite clear that

everyone in the room was focused on him. They were also quite respectful of him!

His name was Shi Wu.

He was the most skilled person in the entirety of the Shaolin Monastery.

The abbot suddenly looked at him and said, "Senior Brother!"

Shi Wu shook his head.

A Buddhist monk said anxiously, "Martial Uncle! Zhang Ye has already trained to the level where he can use concealed power. Moreover, no one is familiar with this Taiji Fist martial arts style. In the entire Shaolin Monastery...only you can take him on!"

Shi Wu looked at them and replied, "I am not his equal."

"But you haven't tried yet, so how could you know?" said someone, gasping.

Shi Wu explained, "By taking Chen Xi for that many moves, there isn't anyone below grandmaster who is a match for him anymore." Taking a pause, he continued, "Even if I can fight on level terms with him, what then? The fault in this affair lies with the Shaolin Monastery. This is a sin caused by those who attended the National Martial Arts Conference. And the sneak attack? Surrounding their people? Hunting them down with the intent to kill? That was a

blunder on the grandest scale! Now that they have come seeking an explanation from us, even if he were to bring the Shaolin Monastery to the ground, we could not raise a voice of objection against him!"

The abbot said, "But the several hundred years of the Shaolin Monastery's heritage, how can we—"

Suddenly, a scream came from the outside!

"Don't you dare!"

"Zhang Ye! Don't you dare!"

"Stop!"

"Stop, I say!"

Bam!

There was a loud crash!

"Ah!"

"Abbot!"

"Martial Granduncle!"

"Zhang Ye has smashed our Shaolin Monastery's plaque!"

The Shaolin Monastery plaque that had been handed down for hundreds of years was now in pieces!

What?

The abbot was furious!

The Shaolin Monastery was furious!

"We'll take him on!"

"We'll take him on!"

"Zhang Ye's taking it too far!"

"We can't let him leave!"

The plaque of the Shaolin Monastery had been handed down for several hundred years. This was their identity, as well as their reputation. By smashing the plaque, this was as good as smacking their faces!

Shi Wu's expression changed slightly. He sighed again then suddenly said, "None of those who came back from the National

Martial Arts Conference this time will be allowed to leave the mountains for five years while they meditate and reflect on their actions! For the rest of this year, the inner courtyard of the Shaolin Monastery will be locked shut! There won't be any more recruitment of warrior monks as well!"

"But why?"

"Yeah, why!"

"Martial Uncle!"

"Martial Granduncle!"

At this moment, the head warrior monk of the Shaolin Monastery, who usually kept to himself, finally spoke up, "Rao Aimin is currently unconscious. Chen Xi is seriously injured and won't be able to fight again within the next half a year. Zhou Tianpeng has been maimed and won't survive much longer. Meanwhile, of the other two grandmasters, one of them is overseas but his location is unknown; the other is already past 90 and has closed himself off from worldly affairs. In the entire national martial arts world, there isn't anyone who can stop him, so what else can we do but shut our doors to the outside world? What can we do if we don't submit? If we really make him angry again, do you want him to come back and take it up with us? By then, it may not be only the several-hundred-year-old plaque that gets demolished; it may be our entire Shaolin Monastery that gets leveled to the ground!"

Hearing that, everyone fell silent!

...

In the front hall.

Zhang Ye dusted off his hands. In front of the many angered Shaolin monks, he turned around and strode off.

He was extremely calm!

As though no one were around!

"Zhang Ye!"

"You..."

"The Shaolin Monastery has become your sworn enemy!"

Even though they shouted at him, none of them dared to make a move to stop him from leaving!

Zhang Ye had come and gone like there was no one around. He could come as he wanted, and leave as he pleased. Before he walked away, he even left some words for them. "Sworn enemies? Alright then, follow my Weibo to get the latest updates of my news. I welcome you all to be sworn enemies with me at any time!"

He even advertised before he left!

The many monks of the Shaolin Monastery exploded with anger at this!

Mount Song is a mountain in central China's Henan Province, along the southern bank of the Yellow River, that is known as the central mountain of the Five Great Mountains of China. Its summit is 1,500 metres (4,900 ft) above sea level.

Buddhist monks refer to the non-warrior monks of Shaolin.

Chapter 944: Attacking Kunlun!

The next day.

At a place where a mountain chain jutted into the clouds.

At the peak of a mountain, the Kunlun Sect's main hall looked extremely magnificent. A plaque with the word "Kunlun" engraved in gold hung in the main hall. Under the sunlight, it looked brilliant and blazing!

Within the halls, a lot of Taoists were busy chattering with one another.

"Zhang Ye is much too lawless!"

"This is infuriating!"

"Barging into Shaolin? Smashing their plaque?"

"With so many experts in the Shaolin Monastery, why didn't they resist?"

"How could they resist? Can anyone even beat him?"

"But there's Master Shi Wu around!"

"I heard that Master Shi Wu did not even appear to face Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye's being provocative right there! He's blatantly clamoring for war against our entire martial arts world!"

"How did the National Martial Arts Association react to this problem?"

"There's no response from them at the moment!"

"Why? Why aren't they sending someone to condemn his actions? This is the Shaolin Monastery we're talking about. Their monastery has been turned upside down and their disciples have been beaten up. Why isn't anyone saying anything?"

"That guy is a total hooligan! He's even more unreasonable than Rao Aimin! How should they condemn his actions? Send a skilled martial artist to condemn him? Fight him in the fight ring? The five remaining grandmasters in the national martial arts world are either injured, maimed, or not around anymore. The only person who might stand a chance against Zhang Ye was Shaolin's Shi Wu, but he didn't even make an appearance that day. He must have known that he isn't a match for Zhang Ye. Then, the whereabouts of the last few remaining powerful hermits all are unknown! So how can they fight him?"

"Just gather up the people to finish him off!"

"The National Martial Arts Conference is over and everyone has dispersed and gone back to their sects, so there aren't too many people they can gather. At this time, where else are you going to be able to gather up 100 to 200 martial arts elites? And if it's about comparing who has more people? He's an A-list celebrity, so how can you have more people than him? Don't you remember how it looked when our Sect Leader and our senior bros returned from the conference that day? They were all beaten up so badly!"

"Phew, we're fortunate that Kunlun is situated in a remote location."

"What do you mean? Even if he finds his way here, we're not afraid of him!"

"Right, there's still Elder Fang and Elder Xu, as well as the other martial uncles around!"

"Hmph, I doubt Zhang Ye would try and cause trouble at Kunlun anyway!"

Just as he was saying this, knocking on the Kunlun Sect's tower doors that had stood for over a hundred years suddenly boomed. It wasn't a light knocking, and neither was it a heavy knocking. The rhythm was neither fast nor slow.

The Taoists of the Kunlun Sect were slightly startled.

"Who is that?"

"Are we expecting any guests today?"

"Not that I know of?"

"Could it be the senior bros returning from their trip down the mountain? But it can't be. Senior Bro Han and the others always take the back door when they come back."

A young Taoist ran down the granite stairway to the front door and shouted to the person behind the door, "Who is it?"

It was a man's voice on the other side of the door.

It sounded very young and rather indifferent.

"Open up, I'm here to check on the water meter," the man simply said.

Check on the water meter?

Go check your sister's water meter!

We only use water from the wells around here, bro!

"Are you from the Area Administrative Committee?" That young Taoist lived in the mountains year in and year out, and did not

have much experience in society, so he went over and lifted up the wooden crossbeam barring the doors.

The doors opened.

A sunglasses-wearing young man slowly walked in from outside.

The young Taoist did not recognize him immediately and tried to stop him. "Hey, hey, what are you trying to do?"

The sunglasses-wearing young man raised his hand and took off his sunglasses, then clipped them between a shirt button. "I'm here to collect a debt."

When the many Kunlun Taoists saw this person, their faces abruptly paled!

"Heavens!"

"Zhang Ye!"

"It's Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye is here!"

"Quick, get the Sect Leader!"

"This is not good!"

"Prepare to face the enemy! Face the enemy!"

The Taoists started shouting in panic!

None of them had expected this. Zhang Ye was still at Mount Song yesterday, yet he had [already arrived](#) at the Kunlun Mountains to attack the Kunlun Sect today!

First was Shaolin!

Would it be them, the Kunlun Sect, next?

Was Zhang Ye really thinking that he could challenge all the large sects by himself?

In an instant, the entire Kunlun Sect was plunged into chaos. Everyone was alarmed as the Kunlun Sect's leader, who was still injured from Zhang Ye and his fans attacking, came out, along with 30 to 40 skilled and unskilled disciples. The highest ranked elders of the Kunlun Sect also came out, and when they saw Zhang Ye standing at the foot of the staircase, everyone was looking pretty bad, with some who blanched!

The Kunlun Sect's leader who had the same surname as Zhang Ye shouted condescendingly, "Zhang Ye! What are you here for?"

Zhang Ye said, "I'm here to seek an explanation."

An old Taoist said angrily, "You injured so many of our Kunlun Sect disciples that day. What are you still seeking an explanation for?"

"That is a separate matter." Zhang Ye said quite calmly, "You people were beaten up because you deserved it. Who told you guys to be so reprehensible in the first place? I'm here today to ask for a proper explanation! Who was it that carried out the sneak attack on me when I was in the ring? Old Rao is only unconscious because she tried to save me. She still hasn't come around, and since that's the case, I'll do what she can't do now on her behalf! So for the debt that she cannot collect, I will collect it for her! That's perfectly justified, right?"

The Kunlun Sect's leader said furiously, "We didn't throw those darts!"

Zhang Ye put up his hand in a very unreasonable manner. "I don't care about that. After the sneak attack and Old Rao's injuries, you people from the large sects came to hunt us down. Therefore, I come to you to seek the answers. Whether it was Kunlun who threw the darts, or Shaolin, or South Wudang, or Kongtong, or the Zhou Family, it makes absolutely no difference to me. I just know it's you people!"

An elder chastised, "Are you still being reasonable here?"

But did they ever stop to think about that day at Tianshan when

they surrounded Rao Aimin and Zhang Ye, where they viciously took insidious actions against them? Were they being reasonable then?

"Don't you dare cross the line!"

"Zhang Ye, do you really think that you're invincible?"

"How dare you trespass on our Kunlun Sect territory!"

"You must not know when to stop!"

"If you want to fight, let's fight!"

"We've sworn to defend Kunlun till our dying breath!"

The Kunlun Sect's leader knew that he couldn't avoid this face-off, so he looked to the several elders standing beside him!

A grumpy elder immediately went forward.

Another elder laughed bitterly and followed reluctantly!

Four elders were now standing in front of Zhang Ye. These four were currently the strongest in the Kunlun Sect, but even they did not dare be overconfident and take Zhang Ye on single-handedly. This was because they knew it would be impossible to do that,

since he was a highly skilled Taiji master who had even achieved concealed power. They could only join hands and take him on in this case. It was nothing to be shameful of either. When it came to dealing with a martial arts master like this, it wasn't necessary to have that many considerations!

Zhang Ye, though, didn't even notice them. He scanned the place, and before long, his eyes landed on the plaque engraved with golden letters that was hanging in the main hall!

When the four elders saw this, they couldn't repress their anger!

"Charge!"

"Mysterious Formation!"

"Surround him!"

The four of them gave each other secret hand signals and attacked with killing blows!

20 attacks!

It only took 20 attacks!

After 20 attacks, only one person was left standing within ten meters of the fight—Zhang Ye.

Even with the four of them coming together, they didn't come close to being Zhang Ye's equal. The four elders were all injured, either lying on the ground, passed out, or clutching their chest while pointing and cursing at Zhang Ye!

"You'll get your retribution!"

"Don't you dare!"

"Stop!"

"No!"

"Your grandpa!"

All of the Kunlun Sect's disciples roared!

Because Zhang Ye had just picked up a stone from the flowerbed and weighed it in his hand. With a nod of his head, Zhang Ye turned his head and set his eyes on that Kunlun Sect plaque, which had also been handed down for hundreds of years. Suddenly, he exerted a force in his finger tips and channeled a stream of concealed power into the stone!

Whoosh!

The stone flew toward the plaque in the main hall!

"Stop!"

"I'll take you on!"

Amid the angry shouts of the Kunlun disciples, a loud crash rang out. The Kunlun Sect's plaque cracked apart and shattered into several pieces in midair before falling to the floor!

The Kunlun Sect's leader who was still had some injuries was so infuriated that he actually passed out from his anger and fell to the floor!

The plaque was smashed!

The Kunlun disciples wailed!

Kunlun meant everything to many of them. The plaque represented their dignity and was something they had sworn to protect with their lives. But now, the Kunlun Sect that had been established for over a hundred years, and which no one had dared to provoke before today, was under attack from just a single person! And their plaque was even smashed! This was a great big slap that continuously smacked their faces! It had crushed all of their dignity and honor!

"Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang!"

"Revenge or death!"

"Kunlun will fight with you to the bitter end!"

"To the bitter end!"

Countless Kunlun Taoists were shouting, enraged!

Zhang Ye just dusted off his hands and told them, "Don't be anxious to shout those words. We still don't know who'll be fighting with whom to the bitter end. Old Rao is still unconscious right now. If anything were to happen to her..." He suddenly raised his voice and pointed at them. "I'll fucking fight with all of you to the bitter end!"

With that, Zhang Ye turned around and strolled out!

No one was brave enough to stop him!

No one could stop him!

He came and went like the wind, leaving the Kunlun main hall in shambles in his wake!

"Quick, attend to the Sect Leader!"

"Sect Leader has fainted!"

"Elder Chen, how are you? How are you holding up?"

An elder who had been seriously injured and left lying on the ground by Zhang Ye looked at Zhang Ye as he walked away. Shock written all over his face, he said, "His kung fu...Has it really reached that level already?"

Another seriously injured elder beside him sighed, "Below the grandmaster level, there really won't be anyone who's a match for him!"

The elder who suffered the lightest injuries turned around and looked at the broken and smashed Kunlun plaque and said, "We're all sinners of the Kunlun Sect! We've brought shame to our ancestral founder! We have brought shame to our martial sect!" Taking a pause, he suddenly said, "Yesterday, it was Shaolin! Today, it was Kunlun! Who will be next? Whose turn is it next? Do you guys still remember the Taiji grandmaster from all those years ago? The one who single-handedly challenged the experts from the eighteen martial sects! Our Kunlun sect leader from over a hundred years ago was defeated by that person! And the current situation is turning out to be the same as the events all those years ago? Is history really repeating itself? Is the Taiji Fist...going to bring us back to a time of bloodshed?"

An old Taoist sighed deeply, "Zhang Ye is only a step away from becoming a grandmaster, and he's just 25 this year! The only thing we can do now is pray that Rao Aimin regains consciousness quickly, or else...the entire martial arts community will be plunged

into chaos!"

"But the martial arts community is already in chaos right now!"

"Hurry and inform the other sects!"

"What should we tell them?"

"Just say...Kunlun has fallen as well!"

Distance between Shaolin and Kunlun - 3,893 km

Chapter 945: Old pal, open up!

The next day.

In the morning.

The Zhou Family's headquarters were situated in a remote region that had great scenery. Rather than calling it a martial sect headquarters, it felt more like a holiday resort.

This place was very well-known to those from the Chinese martial arts world, not only because the Zhou Family Style's disciples were numerous and running a very successful training hall system, but also due to that battle of the grandmasters several years ago. Rao Aimin had fought her way to the Zhou Family's headquarters and single-handedly battled with two of the grandmasters, Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi. Some of the traces left behind from the fight back then could still be seen. A woman's shoeprint was still clearly imprinted in the wooden front doors.

At this moment, the front doors of the headquarters were tightly shut!

Some faint voices came from inside.

"The Kunlun Sect was taken down as well!"

"Then what should we do!"

"Shaolin, Kunlun, who's next?"

"Surely it won't be us, right?"

"That won't happen! H-He needs to rest at some point!"

"That's right. I heard that the four Kunlun Sect elders attacked him together yesterday. Even though Zhang Ye only took 20 attacks to beat the four of them, he would still have sustained some injuries! And even if he were made of steel, he can't possibly attack one sect a day, right?!"

"Whatever, hurry up and pack the things!"

"Yes, Eldest Senior Bro has already spoken. We have to be ready to retreat at a moment's notice."

"We're running away just like this?"

"It's not called running away, it's just a tactical withdrawal!"

"This is too hard to stomach!"

"Oh right, remember to keep the plaque safe. It's been passed down since the time of our ancestral founder—"

Bang bang bang.

Someone suddenly knocked on the door!

The faces of the headquarters' disciples abruptly tightened!

Zhou Tianpeng's seventh disciple of this generation, Seventh Brother Zhou, looked over to the front door and asked while trembling, "Who is it?"

A man spoke from outside, "Old pal, open up!"

Old pal?

Who is your old pal?!

Eighth Brother Zhou furrowed his brows. "Don't you have the wrong address?"

The man outside knocked on the door again and said, "Old pal, open up!"

"Who the hell are you?" When Eldest Brother Zhou heard the commotion, he came out as well.

Then, a surprising turn of events took place!

With a boom and a crash, the front doors of the headquarters

were kicked open by someone on the outside!

Zhang Ye strode in with his hands behind his back. "I'll just barge in since no one's opening the doors!"

Instantly, everyone screamed in shock!

"Ahhhh!"

"It's him!"

"He's here!"

"It's Zhang Ye!"

"Hurry and run!"

"Run?! We have to face the enemy!"

"Face the enemy! Face the enemy!"

"Grab your weapons! Pick up whatever you can get your hands on!"

When the Zhou Family received news from the Kunlun Sect, they started packing up their things overnight and planned to move everyone, including the books and items, from the headquarters by

the end of the day. But little did they expect that they wouldn't make it in time! However, it was clear that they were still prepared for this. After Shaolin met with disaster and the Kunlun Sect got routed, if they still did not make any preparations, then they would really be idiots!

A moment later, more than 20 Zhou Family Style disciples came rushing out. Half of them were actually wielding modern compound bows made out of steel—this strategy was very ruthless, but it could be seen that they really had no other way out. Even if they had to bear the brunt of the criticism of the martial arts community for the rest of their lives, they would still stick with their unwise decision and use this tactic to deal with Zhang Ye!

However, Zhang Ye did not even look up at them because he had received a call at just this moment.

Ring ring ring, ring ring ring.

Eldest Brother Zhou gave a hand signal. "Listen to my commands!"

Everyone from the Zhou Family Style School nervously kept their eyes on Zhang Ye. Some of their hands were shaking badly even though they had compound bows on them. They were in truth not all that confident!

No one could have expected that at such a critical juncture, when faced with so many arrows pointing at him, Zhang Ye could actually do something that would stun everyone from the Zhou

Family Style School and make their jaws drop!

Zhang Ye answered the call and said: "Hello, who is it?"

This was an opening!

You asked for it!

"Loose!" Eldest Brother Zhou's eyes brightened!

The Zhou Family Style's disciples couldn't be more excited as none of them would ever give up on this oversight by Zhang Ye!

Whoosh!

An arrow flew like the wind at him!

The next second, the arrow stuck into the ground near Zhang Ye's feet as it missed its target!

Zhang Ye did not move a muscle. "Oh, Lu Yuhu? I'm outside now, what's the matter?"

Whoosh!

A second arrow was loosed!

Zhang Ye took a step forward all of a sudden, and that arrow zoomed past his face and struck the front door of the headquarters, its shaft rattling!

"Shoot!"

"Loose!"

"Loose!"

A third arrow shot through the air!

Zhang Ye lowered his head slightly and carried on walking.
"What? Old Rao has woken up?"

A fourth arrow was coming for him!

Zhang Ye veered to the left. "When did she wake up? Just now?"

A fifth arrow came whistling in!

Zhang Ye leaned to his right. "Haha, that's good then. I told you guys you didn't need to worry about her. Old Rao is much tougher than everyone else. She doesn't die when others would!"

A sixth arrow darted over!

Zhang Ye turned his head to the side. "Did the doctor say when she'll be discharged?"

A seventh arrow came!

Zhang Ye lowered his head again. "Another two weeks?"

An eighth arrow!

Zhang Ye kept walking forward as he rotated his shoulders to dodge the arrow. "Alright, I understand. Make sure she recovers properly; I'll help her handle the rest. Haha, let her know that she owes me a favor now....Hai, not to the point of owing me a life, just a favor will do!"

Everyone was dumbfounded by what they saw!

Eldest Brother Zhou was dumbfounded!

Third Brother Zhou was dumbfounded!

Fifth Brother Zhou was dumbfounded!

They could not believe their eyes!

Why was it like this?

How could this be?

He could still talk animatedly on the phone as he dodged over a dozen arrows without even a change in expression?

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "Alright, I can't speak now, so I'll hang up first as I have some things to attend to."

He hung up.

The moment Zhang Ye lowered his head to put away his cell phone, the arrow that Eldest Bro Zhou held back from shooting earlier was suddenly loosed. With a whoosh, it flew straight at Zhang Ye's face.

Zhang Ye pocketed his cell phone, then raised his hand!

Time seemed to stop in this instant!

The next second, Zhang Ye grabbed that arrow. He flicked his wrist and threw it to the ground like he was throwing away garbage. He took another two steps forward and finally stood in front of them!

Seventh Brother Zhou exclaimed in horror, "I-Is he even fucking human anymore?"

"How did he do it? How was he able to do that?" Ninth Bro Zhou was shocked into daze.

Eldest Brother Zhou blanched! There really was someone who could dodge all these steel arrows at such a close distance? How was that possible! Even if they weren't very good at archery and the arrow volley was not uniform, this still shouldn't be possible! He knew that Rao Aimin and another one of the five grandmasters could achieve this feat, but he could not understand how Zhang Ye had managed to do it! Even Zhou Tianpeng and Chen Xi at their peak could not accomplish such a feat in this manner! Moreover, he was even talking on the phone?

But they did not know that just because a grandmaster couldn't do it, it would not mean that Zhang Ye couldn't do it. He was probably worse at some aspects compared to those grandmasters, like their concealed power and fighting experience. But with regard to reaction speed and agility, he was definitely superior to everyone else!

Others might not be able to see those arrows because they traveled too fast.

But Zhang Ye could see them clearly and was also able to dodge them as well!

Zhang Ye said with a laugh, "A few days ago, some of you used hidden weapons to carry out a sneak attack on me in the fight ring during the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference. I dodged one of those without getting hurt, so how difficult could it be for me to dodge arrows that you were shooting directly at me!"

"Take him out!"

"Let's all take him out!"

"This is a battle for the Zhou Family Style!"

"Everyone, no need to be afraid!"

"Let's attack together!"

"Let's fight him with all we've got! We have more people on our side!"

"Ah!"

"Let's run away instead!"

"We can't defeat him!"

"Don't hit me, I don't know anything!"

It was utter chaos in the compound!

Five minutes later.

Of the between 20 and 30 people who were present here, no one was left standing besides Zhang Ye.

Eldest Brother Zhou was lying on the ground, shouting, "Zhang Ye, don't you dare! That plaque was passed down by our Zhou Family Style's ancestral founder! If you touch it, you're making yourself as a sworn enemy of our Zhou Family Style!"

However, Zhang Ye took down that plaque and broke it with a single stomp. "The moment you people tried to hunt me down, we became sworn enemies! I've touched it and even stepped on it. What will you do?"

"Ah!"

"Oh, ancestral founder!"

"Old Crook Zhang!"

Quite a few people screamed in anguish!

Eldest Brother Zhou and several of the most loyal Zhou Family Style disciples saw red. They finally realized now just what kind of person they had offended that day!

Zhang Ye dusted off his hands again in that usual manner.

He turned around and departed, fulfilled.

The receding figure that the Zhou Family Style's disciples saw infuriated and rather terrified them simultaneously!

Eldest Brother Zhou suddenly bellowed, "Quickly notify the other sects!"

Eighth Brother Zhou despaired, "Which sect will he attack tomorrow?"

Ninth Brother Zhou clutched his arm in pain and said, "Maybe... there won't be a need to wait until tomorrow!"

"Why?"

"What do you mean?"

A few of the Zhou Family disciples who could still speak asked this.

Ninth Brother Zhou was sweating profusely as he struggled to raise his hand and point west!

Everyone understood immediately!

The headquarters of the Kongtong and Iron Palm Sects were situated not too far from them!

"Hurry! Hurry and inform them!"

"Inform the Kongtong and Iron Palm Sects!"

"Everyone who escapes is one less victim!"

"I'm afraid it might already be too late!"

...

Half an hour later.

At the Kongtong Sect.

Someone was banging on the front door!

"Who is it!" Wary voices came from within the Kongtong Sect.

Bang bang bang!

"Old pal, open up!"

Bang bang bang!

"Old pal, open up!"

Inside the Kongtong Sect, everyone was suddenly screaming!

"Ah!"

"Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye is here!"

"Let's get out of here, quick!"

"Go!"

"Run! Run to the mountains behind the building!"

But the next second, the front door was kicked open by Zhang Ye.
"Fuck, how did you people know it was me before the doors were even open? I'm here to collect a debt. It time to repay, with interest, the debts you people owe me!"

Bang!

Thump!

Crash!

Sounds of fighting rang out!

The Kongtong Sect's plaque which had been passed down for hundreds of years was smashed to pieces by the palm of Zhang Ye!

...

Awhile later.

At the Iron Palm's headquarters.

"Let's go! Let's go! Let's go!"

"Zhang Ye is about to arrive!"

"Shaolin, Kunlun, the Zhou Family and Kongtong were all taken down by him!"

"Are we next?"

"Hurry up!"

"Pack everything up, faster!"

"The plaque! Take care of the plaque!"

But all of a sudden, without any warning, a sound came from beyond the door!

This eerie sound horrified the Iron Palm branch's disciples. Other people might not find the sound to be anything special, and the word used to describe it would not be considered scary either. In fact, it even sounded pretty harmless. But without exception, when the Iron Palm's disciples heard this sound, they were all scared out of their wits!

Bang bang bang!

"Old pal, open up!"

Bang bang bang!

Bang bang bang!

"Old pal, open up!"

Chapter 946: Take this one 'alive'!

The next day.

At the front doors of South Wudang.

An eerie voice echoed!

Bang bang bang.

"Old pal, open up!"

Bang bang bang

"Old pal, open up!"

Half an hour later, screams rang throughout South Wudang!

The [front doors](#) were kicked down!

The plaque was smashed to pieces!

...

The day after next.

And the day following that.

That ghostly sentence sounded at many of the martial sects' headquarters!

"Old pal, open up!"

Then chaos ensued!

...

Ten days later.

Mount Hua.

The Huashan Sect's headquarters.

There were two sounds of knocking on the main doors. Bang bang.

"Open up!"

Bang bang bang.

"Open up!"

Suddenly, a trap that had laid in waiting was activated without warning and a large net was released from above. It firmly caught the unsuspecting person standing before the front doors!

The front doors suddenly opened!

"We've done it! It's a success!"

"Get him!"

"Tie him up!"

"Kill him!"

"Kill the thieving bastard!"

"Defend the Huashan Sect!"

"Beat the fucker!"

A barrage of punches and kicks!

Weapons were drawn!

It was a mass drubbing!

But in the next moment, a piercing roar thundered from inside the net, stunning all of the Huashan disciples!

"Motherfucking hell!" Fan Wen, the junior brother of the Huashan Sect leader, had his head wrapped in bandages and his arm in a cast. He was lying on the ground with a bloody nose and a bruised face. He shouted angrily, "Why the fuck are you guys beating me up!"

After being released from the police station's holding cell a few days ago, Fan Wen had gone to a local hospital for treatment. His arm was put into a cast and he also got a rabies shot—for the bite that he received from a Tibetan Mastiff. After much fuss, he'd finally returned the sect's headquarters today. But he could never have expected to get beaten up so violently before he could even step through the doors. He was beaten so badly that even the cast on his arm was shattered!

All the disciples were dumbfounded!

"Aiyo!"

"Martial Uncle Fan!"

"Martial Uncle!"

"Why is it you? Why did it have to be you?"

"Why are back?"

"Aiya, you should have said you were coming back!"

Fan Wen howled, "What do you fucking mean I didn't say? Didn't I ask you guys to open the doors for me!"

Several disciples flusteredly went to remove the net and rescue Fan Wen out of it. They thought to themselves that with the ghostly "open up" phrase that he had used, who'd have known it was him? In recent days, that "old pal, open up" line had spread throughout the entire martial arts community and become the most frightening words that anyone from the large sects could hear, turning the people into birds startled by a sound!

Shaolin was barged into!

Kunlun was taken down!

The Zhou Family Style was exterminated!

The Kongtong and Iron Palm Sects had fallen one after another!

Afterwards, in the span of 10 days, South Wudang, the Emei, the Maoshan Sect, the Zhao Family Style, and the remaining dozen or so large and small sects that had taken part in the denouncement of Rao Aimin were all attacked by Zhang Ye. Their front doors were breached, and their sect's plaque was smashed. No one could escape his wrath. There were even two sects who had relocated to a secret hideout overnight when they received news of Zhang Ye's

impending arrival, but Zhang Ye still managed to find them somehow! Even after all that, Zhang Ye still did not intend to stop!

Who would be next?

Everyone already knew the answer!

Next was them, the Huashan Sect!

This was because they were the only martial sect left standing that had partaken in that incident. Moreover, Zhang Ye could have already made his way here when he was last near Mount Hua, but he had not come. Instead, he left this place for last. From that, it could be seen that Zhang Ye placed a certain amount of importance on this location. This was because on the day of the National Martial Arts Conference, Chen Xi and Huashan Sect were undoubtedly the lead main force of the main force, and was the only sect still with a grandmaster as its leader today!

Now that Fan Wen was back, he was also asking about the situation anxiously.

After the disciples related the events, everyone looked dejected as their expressions darkened!

"How are the Sect Leader's injuries?"

"He has not recovered yet!"

"If Zhang Ye comes, then will Sect Leader..."

"He certainly can't fight!"

"Then shall we...make a run for it?"

"How can we run away? We're the Huashan Sect, for goodness sake!"

"Right, we won't run even if it means our deaths!"

"Forsake our martial and run away? The ancestral founder would surely curse us to death!"

"But who can hold off Zhang Ye?"

"Where are the reinforcements? Where are they at?"

"We've already sent out an appeal to the martial arts community! But..."

"The other sects can hardly look after themselves right now, so who would answer to our appeal?"

"A wise man does not fight when the odds are against him! When the Sect Leader has recovered from his injuries, we can fight again

then..."

"We can't run!"

"We will take him on then!"

A large sect still had the dignity of a large sect, after all!

A few minutes later, a large group of people suddenly arrived outside their front doors.

When the Huashan Sect saw this, they got very excited. "They're from the National Martial Arts Association!"

The people from the National Martial Arts Association were here, a team of more than a dozen martial artists led by a steward. When they arrived, that steward immediately found Fan Wen and said, "Ah, Old Fan, why are you injured again?"

There was fresh blood all over his arms.

Fan Wen looked glum. "It's nothing. I fell down earlier." He couldn't possibly blame it on getting beaten up by his own sect's disciples, could he?

The steward from the National Martial Arts Association said, "Where is Grandmaster Chen?"

"He's recuperating at a different location," a Huashan Sect elder said.

The National Martial Arts Association's steward nodded. "We're here to back you guys up. Don't worry. If Zhang Ye tries to cause trouble here at Huashan Sect, the entire martial arts community will not let him off easy!"

However, at this moment, an eerie sound suddenly came from beyond the door!

"Old pal, open up....Eh, it's already open? I'll let myself in then." Zhang Ye who was dressed in training clothes had at some point made his way quietly here!

The Huashan Sect's people were horrified!

"Ah!"

"Zhang Ye!"

"It's Zhang Ye!"

"H-He's really here!"

Many of them picked up their weapons at once!

The National Martial Arts Association's steward was surprised. He looked at Zhang Ye and asked, "You really have the courage to appear on these grounds?"

Zhang Ye smiled. "Why would I not?"

The National Martial Arts Association's steward said angrily, "I am Li Yan from the National Martial Arts Association! And I am in charge of handling this problem! The Association has given me full authority in handling you. Zhang Ye, do you know what you're doing? Do you know who you're pitting yourself against?"

Zhang Ye glanced at him. "I'd also like to know if you know who you people are pitting yourselves against. I've always been a reasonable man. If people are good to me, I will return the favor ten times over. But if someone provokes me, I'll be sure to return the favor a hundred times over! Li Yan, right? From the National Martial Arts Association? You're in charge of handling me? Can you handle it?! You people are suddenly making an appearance now? Where were you during the National Martial Arts Conference? Where were you when the news of the sneak attack was reported? Where were you when the dozen martial sects went against their morals and surrounded us and attacked? Stop bullshitting me!"

Li Yan said furiously, "Don't you dare make a move against the Huashan Sect!"

Chen Xi was the vice president of the National Martial Arts Association, while Fan Wen was a steward at the association. The relationship between the National Martial Arts Association and the

Huashan Sect was therefore very close. When the other martial sects were attacked by the enemy, they did not show up. But when the Huashan Sect was in danger of attack, the National Martial Arts Association immediately sent their people over!

However, no one expected what happened next!

"Ha!" Zhang Ye laughed heartily.

Li Yan's voice had just faded when Zhang Ye took a large stride forward and used a pushing hands movement to land a hit on Li Yan, leaving him lying on the ground!

"Old Li!"

"Ah!"

"Stop!"

"Old Crook Zhang!"

The Huashan Sect was stunned!

The National Martial Arts Association's people were also stunned!

Li Yan lay on the ground and cried out angrily, "Zhang Ye!"

Zhang Ye threw up his hands. "See if I care! I was still worried I might not find someone from the National Martial Arts Association. If it weren't for the National Martial Arts Association siding with their own that day, the issue wouldn't have escalated to this point. I have yet to take this up with you people, but you're already here pointing your fingers at me? You think I won't make a move on the Huashan Sect? Let alone Huashan Sect, even for those of you from the National Martial Arts Association, I'll fucking beat up any who come forward! What can you do about that? Back at the National Martial Arts Conference, you people from the National Martial Arts Association and the various large sects were all expressing an attitude of 'whoever was more skilled would have the last say.' Well, alright then, in recent days, I am the most skilled in the national martial arts world, so the last say belongs to me now! Isn't that right?"

He was too imposing!

This attack from Zhang Ye dumbfounded those people from the National Martial Arts Association!

The dozen or so National Martial Arts Association people were ready to charge, but then took a step back again, probably afraid to do so!

A madman!

He's really a fucking madman!

Then Zhang Ye shouted, "Where's Chen Xi? Why is he still not coming out?"

No one spoke.

Zhang Ye said, "He's not coming out, right? Then I have no choice. I've been very nice, deliberately giving him more than ten days to recover from his injuries and left the Huashan Sect as my last stop. Since he still hasn't recovered, don't blame me for being a bully. I want to see who'll try to stop me today!"

Fan Wen raged, "When my senior bro recovers fully, that'll be the day you meet your demise!"

Zhang Ye was amused. "Wait for him to fully recover? It's still a question whether he can even land a hit on me. Besides, by then, Old Rao would've already been discharged. I'm guessing that Old Rao will still want to pay a visit to the Huashan Sect when the time comes, so you can leave those words for her when she comes!"

Fan Wen choked at those words!

If Zhang Ye were bullying his way around the Huashan Sect today due to their lack of people, then when Rao Aimin came around, they would truly be swept away. Even if their sect leader were not injured, or if his martial arts skill were to greatly increase all of a sudden, that would still not be enough for him to equal Rao Aimin!

"Let's take him on!"

"Charge!"

"Enough with the talk! Attack!"

A battle instantly broke out!

Huashan Sect was still a large sect after all, so they had many experts on their side. Compared to Kongtong or even the Zhou Family Style, they were on a completely different plane!

But just like Zhang Ye had said earlier, in the current Chinese martial arts world where the five grandmasters were either injured or not around, he had the last say in things. They were not even a match for him!

One person fell!

Ten people fell!

Twenty people fell!

Zhang Ye was also injured from taking seven or eight punches. In addition, a person from the National Martial Arts Association slashed his arm with a sword. But an hour later, he was the only person left standing!

They couldn't beat him!

They simply couldn't beat him!

The Huashan Sect people despaired!

Several of those from the National Martial Arts Association did not even have the courage to attack anymore at the end!

Zhang Ye looked at them. "Let me give you all a word of advice today. Do not think that if you're more skilled, you'll have the last say in things, that everything must follow your reasoning, that the world revolves around you and everyone else has to abide by your rules! There will always be someone who is more skilled than you!"

Whoosh.

He picked up a staff and prodded it upward!

The Huashan Sect's plaque that was hanging overhead immediately fell into Zhang Ye's hands!

"Zhang Ye!" Fan Wen glared at him with immense hatred!

"No!"

"Stop!"

"Stop!"

"If you want to break something, break me!"

"Don't touch our Huashan Sect's plaque!"

The Huashan Sect's disciples all looked doleful!

It's done for!

The Huashan Sect's plaque couldn't be protected!

Zhang Ye had been going around smashing the plaques of the various large sects and smacking their faces in the process. Everyone knew this by now!

Zhang Ye had already raised his hand as an open palm. But just as he was about to smash the plaque in his hand, he suddenly stopped and started studying the plaque. He turned it around, looked at the front, and even lowered his head to sniff at the wood's scent. In the end, Zhang Ye decided not to smash this plaque and tucked it under his arm instead, carrying it away with him.

Yes.

He took this one "alive"!

It was made from [fragrant rosewood](#) after all!

The front doors of most martial sects are also known as the [Mount Gates](#).

[Dalbergia odorifera](#)

Chapter 947: A man who strikes fear into the hearts of the martial arts community when mentioned!

On this day.

Somewhere.

At some military hospital.

Even though it was already spring, it was still not that warm out yet in the morning. Light drizzle was falling outside. Zhang Ye was carrying an umbrella and wearing sunglasses as he strolled into the hospital. After he folded the umbrella, he took a beaded bracelet out from his pocket and went looking for Rao Aimin's ward.

Before he walked in, he heard people talking inside.

"Madam Rao, you can't be discharged yet!"

"Why not?"

"There are still many tests that we have not conducted, and two more bottles of medication to finish."

"Don't try to bullshit me. Go and process the paperwork for my discharge. I want to leave by the afternoon. Other than that, just

what kinds of meals does your hospital provide here? Did you scoop it up from the drain or something? You should change the cook as soon as possible."

"You mustn't get out of bed!"

"But I've already recovered."

"You were in a coma for several days. You don't have any strength as of now and still require further treatment!"

"I have no strength?"

A loud thud reverberated!

It sounded like something had been flattened!

"Damn."

"Senior Sis."

"Just listen to the doctor, please!"

The ward's door opened and that doctor strode out angrily, close to vomiting blood.

Several of the medical personnel standing a distance away looked

over.

"Doctor Zhou, what's the matter?" a nurse asked.

Stressed, a female physician said, "Bed 13's Ms. Rao is kicking up a storm again?"

"That woman in Bed 13 has already driven away two doctors!" the chief nurse said, discouraged.

At his wits' end, Doctor Zhou said, "Just ignore her from now on. If she wishes to be discharged, then let her get discharged."

"How can we do that?" That female physician tried to go by the medical ethics. "We have to be responsible to our patients. Even though the patient in Bed 13 is rather hot-headed and has a sharp tongue, she is still our patient!"

Doctor Zhou said furiously, "Have you ever seen a patient who just regained consciousness after several days flatten a stainless steel lunch box?" He then waved his hand and ordered, "Get her discharged quickly. With that powerful constitution of hers, if we treat her as a patient, then the rest of the world must be disabled!"

The nurse: "..."

The female physician: "..."

Zhang Ye: "..."

This Old Rao! Why is she always so troublesome!

Zhang Ye pushed the door open and went inside.

This was a single person ward.

The disciples from the Eight Trigrams School were all inside. When they saw Zhang Ye, everyone got excited!

"Aiyo!"

"Teacher Zhang is back!"

"How did it go, Master Zhang?"

"Are you hurt in any way?"

"Teacher Zhang, you were so amazing!"

"You've really helped us vent our anger!"

Everyone stood up to welcome him like they were celebrating a hero's return. Zhang Ye had been away for half a month now, and although they did not accompany him on his road trip, they were still a part of the martial arts community. They could even be

called the main party involved in this incident, so while the ordinary folk did not know about it, or even if the outside world's news did not report about it, how could they not know of the glorious deeds that Zhang Ye did in his time away? He had essentially gone to thrash more than a dozen martial sects and routed them all! Several of the younger disciples of the Eight Trigrams School were even looking at Zhang Ye as though he were a god of some kind. The events that occurred in recent days had left a very deep impression upon them! And it felt really good too!

Xu Fan brought over a chair. "Master Zhang, please, have a seat!"

Zhang Ye sat down and smiled as he pointed at a gauze covering his left arm, and said, "It's nothing, just slightly wounded."

Song Jiao and the rest heaved sighs of relief. "That's good then, good."

On the sickbed, Rao Aimin, who was watching Chenchen do her homework, glanced over as well. "You're back?"

Beside her, a stainless steel lunch box lay there misshapen after being flattened by her.

"How are you doing?" Zhang Ye asked.

Rao Aimin looked rather well. She tilted her chin upward. "I'm not dead."

Zhang Ye nodded. "I suppose you aren't."

Lu Yuhu smacked his lips and said, "The doctor says that she can't be discharged yet, but Eldest Senior Sis keeps insisting on being discharged."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "I overheard the doctor say that they're already processing her discharge. I think it's because they're afraid that your eldest senior sis will tear the hospital apart if they don't!"

Chenchen also raised her head at this moment and greeted him. "Zhang Ye."

"Whoa, you're studying?" Zhang Ye looked at her.

Chenchen acknowledged him and suddenly turned her gaze to the bracelet in his hand. "Zhang Ye, what is that?"

Zhang Ye looked down, then held it up and said, "This? It's a bracelet. I'll give it to you since you like it." He then threw it at her indifferently.

Lu Yuhu caught it for Chenchen and held it up to inspect it. "Yo, is this made from fragrant rosewood?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Yeah, it is."

"It looks like it is even made from old growth wood?" Lu Yuhu said, "It's quite big too. This should be quite valuable."

Zhang Ye replied, "You like it also? I'll give you one too since you like it." He felt around in his bag, taking out another similar looking bracelet and throwing it to him. "Who else wants one?"

"How many of those do you have?" Xu Fan was astonished.

Song Jiao also wondered, "Didn't you go out to thrash those large sects? Why did you bring back so many local souvenirs with you?"

The eldest and second senior brothers, along with the others, were also very curious.

Zhang Ye sighed and then mentioned something that nearly gave the entire Eight Trigrams Palm's disciples heart attacks. "What local souvenirs? I went to the Huashan Sect to destroy their sect's plaque, but when I saw that it was made of fragrant rosewood, I took it instead and got it made into these beaded bracelets!" He threw his bag onto the table and rummaged through it before pouring out more than a dozen beaded rosewood bracelets. "I'll keep one for myself. Feel free to take one of the rest for yourself."

Song Jiao was dumbfounded!

Xu Fan was dumbfounded!

Everyone from the Eight Trigrams School was dumbfounded!

Fuck, are you serious?

The Huashan Sect's plaque that had been handed down for hundreds of years was turned into these beaded bracelets by you?

Turned into these beaded rosewood bracelets?

Into these beaded rosewood bracelets?

Beaded rosewood bracelets?

Lu Yuhu was holding the beaded bracelet he had just caught. His hands trembled. He nearly passed out, but said with a quavering voice, "Teacher Zhang, they must have gone through eight lifetimes of tribulations when they encountered you this time!

...

At a small sect.

"Have you heard?"

"The Huashan Sect has been taken down too!"

"Yeah, I heard about it! How scary!"

"The people from the National Martial Arts Association who went to back them up were beaten up as well!"

"Zhang Ye has gone crazy this time!"

"You're making it sound like he's ever once been normal!"

"Yeah, I've watched him on television since last year. If you've ever read his Weibo and know about his past deeds, you'd know that he's always been a madman!"

"We were lucky to not have attended the recent National Martial Arts Conference."

"The entire martial arts community has been thrown into disarray! I heard that the National Martial Arts Association intended to ask the remaining two grandmasters to deal with Zhang Ye, but I doubt that plan will come to fruition!"

"It's impossible to get those two anyway. Besides, even if they did, what's the point? Don't forget how old Zhang Ye is. He's already achieved concealed power, and is also practicing the martial arts style of the Taiji Fist. Who knows if he'll become a grandmaster too in the near future. Would a Taiji Fist grandmaster still have any worthy opponents in this entire world? Even at his current state, he could force a draw with a grandmaster. Moreover, Rao Aimin will be discharged from hospital soon as well! If those two were to join forces and set their eyes on the entire country....No, set their eyes on the world, there wouldn't be any worthy opponents for them! How can anyone take them on!"

"Indeed!"

"The large sects couldn't even take their vengeance!"

"They deserved it for being bullies in the first place. It was already a deathmatch, so why did they still resort to using sneak attacks! Hearing about it just makes my blood run cold! Those large sects threw good money after bad! They've bumped into a tough opponent!"

...

At a gathering of some non-affiliates.

Liu Yiquan wiped his sweat away and said, "Old Bro Zhang Ye has taken down the Huashan Sect as well!"

"How many is that already?" Liu Yizhang didn't know whether to laugh or cry as he started counting on his fingers.

Beside him, Li Quanneng said, "It's the sixteenth!"

He Badao said in awe, "All sixteen sects that went after them in the hills have been annihilated by Bro Zhang Ye! None survived!"

"How freaking awesome!"

"Yeah!"

"Zhang Ye's martial arts are ridiculously good!"

"It's not only that his martial arts are good. There have been a lot of people in history who were more skilled than Zhang Ye, but how many have dared to go up to each of those reputable sects to thrash them and smash their plaques? Only Zhang Ye decided to do that! Not only his kung fu, Zhang Ye is also the most audacious one of all!"

One person!

Sweeping away a dozen of those reputable large sects?

What awesome was that!

How domineering was that!

However, the even more domineering act was yet to come.

...

Some of those in the martial arts community who were better informed suddenly received a shocking piece of news. This news even dumbfounded some of them for a long time, making them unable to come back to their senses and forcing them to drop their

jaws!

"The large sects have been slapped ruthlessly in the face this time!"

"Yes, whether it is Shaolin or Huashan, a martial sect getting its plaque smashed is something that is considered really terrible in the Chinese martial arts world. What's more, Zhang Ye even smashed 16 of their plaques all by himself?"

"Only 15 were smashed."

"Right, he didn't dare smash the Huashan Sect's plaque!"

"I heard about that too. Sounds like only the Huashan Sect was let off the hook this time. Their plaque was taken away by Zhang Ye instead of being smashed. I guess even Zhang Ye did not dare go overboard with a sect that still has a grandmaster as its leader. Hur hur, judging from that action, that's all he's got. He's also a bully."

Suddenly, someone broke the news!

"What are you all saying? A bully?"

"Is that not so?"

"Pfft! You guys don't know shit!"

"Eh? What are you trying to say here?"

"I just received a very reliable piece of news! The Huashan Sect was the unluckiest of all the sects that were targeted! After Zhang Ye left, he found a wood processing factory at the foot of the mountain and got them to make that fragrant rosewood plaque of the Huashan Sect into beaded bracelets! My god, made into beaded bracelets! Tell me now, how is he a bully!?"

"What?"

"Holy fuck!"

"Are you serious?"

"Of course I'm serious! The news spread a while ago! I think that a lot of people have already found out about this too!"

"Heavens!"

"Holy shit!"

"This...this..."

"Just what sort of a person is that man!"

...

Meanwhile.

Roars of anger and piercing screams resounded within the Huashan Sect!

When a few of the Huashan Sect's disciples found out about this news, they fainted to the ground with a thud!

"Zhang Ye!"

"Fuck your grandpa!"

"You're too damn evil!"

"That's the plaque handed down by our ancestral founder!"

"We're your sworn enemy!"

"Despicable!"

"How despicable!"

"Sworn enemies!"

Fan Wen was enraged!

Chen Xi was extremely infuriated and coughed for a full minute, worsening some of his healed injuries!

...

Elsewhere.

The other large sects were also cursing and swearing!

"He's really pushing it too far! Pushing it too far!"

"Does he still abide by the laws? Does he even know about the code of the martial arts community?"

"What he did was even more evil than taking someone's life!"

"The Huashan Sect's plaque was made into beaded bracelets? Fuck! He's really gone too far, how can he do that! His lack of morals must have stretched across eight lifetimes!"

But while they cursed and swore, some of those large sects' disciples were also secretly feeling lucky and a lingering sense of fear. They were fortunate that at the time of the founding of their martial sects, the ancestral founders did not have much money and had only used some simple wooden materials for their plaques. If it had been some good material like the Huashan Sect's plaque, all these large sects' plaques would probably have been taken away by

Zhang Ye to make tables, chairs, benches, or some treasured furniture. If that had happened, it would have caused a huge uproar and they would probably vomit at least three liters of blood! Who could bear with something like that!

This was not just simply face smacking anymore!

It was face trampling!

Trampling on the face step by step!

If Zhang Ye's attack on the 16 sects was said to be a shocking event in the Chinese martial arts world!

Then Zhang Ye using the Huashan Sect's plaque and turning it into beaded bracelets was something that disintegrated the entire Chinese martial arts world. The National Martial Arts Association, and people of the various martial sects and non-affiliates, all nearly passed out from Zhang Ye's shamelessness. But they were also astonished by Zhang Ye's guts! It was only now that many of those in the martial arts community truly knew just what kind of a hooligan had arrived in their Chinese martial arts world!

After this incident, Zhang Ye became even more infamous in the Chinese martial arts world!

In the current Chinese martial arts world, there were two phrases that must never be mentioned ever again!

One was "old pal, open up"!

And the other was "beaded rosewood bracelets"!

Overnight, Zhang Ye had become a man who struck fear into the hearts of the martial arts community when mentioned! Moreover, everyone knew that the incident this time would surely be recorded into the annals of Chinese martial arts history and forever be a painful history for those 16 martial sects!

Chapter 948: Hiring an agent!

It was now March.

In Beijing.

It was the season where flowers bloomed in the spring's warmth.

About a month had passed and Zhang Ye was finally back at Beijing. Before he reached home, he had already posted on Weibo after arriving at the airport: "I'm back in Beijing, everything is fine."

The fans actively replied back.

"Wow, Old Zhang is back!"

"Where did you go?"

"Has that problem Tianshan been handled yet? Why didn't the news report on it?"

"It's good that you're back. Teacher Zhang, when are you going to come up with a new show?"

"Your contract with Central TV should almost be up, right? One more month left?"

"Teacher Zhang, you were away for so long!"

"Get back to work quickly, or else you might drop out of the A-list rankings!"

The phone calls came in shortly afterward!

The first call was from Ha Qiqi. "Director Zhang, you're back?"

Zhang Ye laughed: "I just got off the plane. How's the documentary on the air pollution problem going?"

Ha Qiqi said: "We're currently shooting. It's almost finished."

Zhang Ye nodded and said: "If there's anything you need me for, just tell me."

"Oh right, Director Zhang." Ha Qiqi suddenly said: "When you weren't around for all these days, there were quite a lot of people looking for you. Some of them wanted to get you to make advertisements for them, some inquired about your copyrights, and there were all sorts of people looking for you to do commercials. When they couldn't get through to you, they contacted our Central TV Documentary Channel instead. You might not know this, but your assistant Little Wang was so busy taking your calls that she couldn't get any work done."

Zhang Ye said in embarrassment: "I was a little caught up recently."

Ha Qiqi said helplessly: "When do you intend to get an agent?"

"An agent?" Zhang Ye repeated.

Ha Qiqi laughed dryly. "I think that you should really hire an agent."

"Alright, I'll think about it," Zhang Ye said.

After hanging up, a call from the publishing firm came in.

"Teacher Zhang, I've gotten through to you at last!"

"What's the matter?"

"The sales for Ghost Blows Out the Light have been performing very well, so we've been thinking of adding a print run for half a month."

"Just do it. I'll leave the decision making to you all."

"But no matter what, we still have to inform you. How can we make the decision for such matters on your behalf? And there were also some overseas publishers who inquired about the copyrights

to several of your fairy tales. It seems like they are interested in publishing an English and German edition of them, but since they could not get through to you, they contacted us instead. I will send you their contact info in a bit."

"Alright, thank you very much."

Next was a call from Dong Shanshan.

"Zhang'er, where did you go?"

"Haha, a tour, I just went on a tour."

"You simply disappeared without a care and just left everything for me to handle. When some people couldn't get in touch with you, they called me instead and wanted my help to pass their messages along to you. Did I become your agent?"

"Hai, I wasn't able to answer any calls recently."

"Check your email. I've already organized and labeled everything for you."

"Thank you, Shanshan. I'll treat you to a meal sometime."

"Don't give me that, it's not necessary. But you really should hire an agent quickly now that you're an A-list celebrity. It's fine even if you don't have a team, but you can't possibly not have an agent

either, right? It wouldn't look good if it got out, but more importantly this really inconveniences everything. When there's something for which we need to look for you, you just can't be contacted. What happens if something gets delayed?"

"Alright, I will think about it."

"Don't think anymore and quickly hire one. Get someone to recommend a few candidates to you. With your current reputation and status, as well as your future development, if people in the industry know that you're looking for an agent, there will surely be many people flocking to you. Then you'll have a wider range of candidates to pick from and won't have to worry about not finding a suitable one."

"OK."

She was the second person today to suggest this to him.

On his way home, Zhang Ye pondered this. He was a small-time celebrity and not famous in the past, so he handled almost everything himself and did not need an agent nor did he consider joining any talent agencies. But as he got more famous and became an A-list celebrity, he had more things to handle as well. Just like now, he had already received many phone calls the moment he arrived back in Beijing. Although Zhang Ye did not intend to accept commercial performances or make advertisements, even so, he needed someone to reject those offers for him, didn't he? Everyone constantly calling his office or his old classmate to look for him was not a long-term solution. In fact, it was even causing a lot of trouble for them.

...

Caishikou.

At Zhang Ye's parents' house.

"Dad, Mom, I'm home." Zhang Ye opened the door and entered the house.

His mother came out to welcome him. She said, "Why did you stay out for so long?"

"Hai, there was something I needed to take care of." Zhang Ye took off his shoes and changed into his slippers.

His father asked, "Where's Chenchen and her aunt?"

Zhang Ye said, "They're back as well and have already returned home. Her aunt...has fallen sick and will need to rest for a few more days. She will come over in another two days to thank you both for taking care of her child for such a long time."

His mother heaved a sigh of relief. "It's fine as long as she's alright. The last time she called to leave her seemingly last words gave me a terrible fright." Then she passed a piece of paper to him and said, "By the way, these are the phone numbers that called you in the past half a month. Why did so many of them call our home

to look for you? Since your dad was afraid that it would delay your work, he did not neglect anyone who called. He wrote down everything for you, so just take it from here."

Zhang Ye looked down, then exclaimed, "There were this many people who called?"

His mother laughed and said, "You're an A-list celebrity, so how can it be the same as before?"

At the mention of this, his father said slightly angrily, "The house phone kept ringing and every caller was looking for you. I wanted to pull out the telephone line because I couldn't even have a peaceful afternoon nap at home."

Zhang Ye quickly said, "I'll take it from here, I'll take it from here."

His mother said, "Let's eat first."

"Hai, I'll eat after I've finished with all these," Zhang Ye said, stressed.

Back in his own room.

Zhang Ye took a deep breath before beginning his work.

The novel's authorization for an additional print run? Signed!

The fairy tales' international copyright? 200,000 RMB for everything? Get lost!

The Voice's international copyright authorization? 1 million USD? Goodbye!

An invitation to attend a beverage enterprise's 10th anniversary celebrations? Can't go!

A managing director of a global top 500 company was getting married and he was invited to be the host of the wedding event? Bye bye!

A commercial endorsement for a condom product? Go away!

One hour...

Three hours...

Five hours...

Zhang Ye was busy handling all the matters from the morning until afternoon! For some commercial performances or jobs, all he needed to do was ignore them and that would be the end of it. But there were many others that he had to reply to one by one. Since they thought so highly of him and even got their people to contact him again and again, Zhang Ye could not possibly just ignore them.

Even if he didn't intend to take the job or accept their requests, he had to at least give them a reply. But when they knew that it was Zhang Ye calling them back personally, of course they got a little bit excited and couldn't help but say a few words. And try to extend the conversation. As such, the time taken to get everything done was dragged out much more than originally intended! This also included some weird people he encountered who wanted to have a long chat with him!

"Little Ye, it's time to eat!"

"Son!"

"Quickly come and eat dinner!"

It was already time for dinner.

His parents had to call him three times before Zhang Ye finally came out to join them.

Zhang Ye who had just handled all the outstanding work was extremely exhausted. The moment he came out, he exclaimed, "This won't do. I was exhausted by all of that, so I must quickly find myself an agent! Now! Immediately!"

He had no choice but to find one!

Now that he had reached A-list status, he was getting too busy to handle so many things by himself. With his character, he could not

possibly take care of all these things every day!

He had to find one!

He had to find one immediately!

Chapter 949: The battle of the agents!

On the same night.

He gave Zhang Yuanqi a call. The Heavenly Queen was acknowledged to have the best social ties in the entertainment industry. Zhang Ye did not have many friends and she was the only person he knew to have the means. If he wanted to find an agent as soon as possible, then it would definitely be the most convenient to contact Zhang Yuanqi.

Du du.

The call connected.

"Hello, Sister Zhang, it's me!"

"Mhm."

"What are you doing? Where are you?"

"Home."

"By yourself?"

"Yes."

"I've got something to tell you. There's something I need your help with."

"I'm listening."

"I'm looking to hire an agent as fast as possible!"

"Any requirements?"

"I don't have too many requirements and either gender is fine, but it'd be best if it's a woman as it will be easier for me to communicate with her. She should be capable of handling work, but it doesn't matter whether she is very capable or not. Even if she's a rookie, it's fine. You know that my social ties are not that good, so I don't have many demands for my potential agent's popularity with others as long as she suits my needs. It'd be great if she has the same values as me so that I can save the trouble of communicating. And, uh, it'd be best if her appearance is not too shabby either, since she'll be representing me, after all, and has to pull in the points in the looks department for me. I don't have many demands regarding her figure either, but she must not look too bad. She should at least have a decent figure since she'll need to appear in public sometimes on my behalf..."

He rattled off a long string of demands.

In the end, Zhang Yuanqi summarized his requests in a few words. "So a busty, beautiful woman, and nothing else matters?"

Zhang Ye was slightly embarrassed. "...Right!"

Zhang Yuanqi said: "Wait for my message then."

After hanging up, Zhang Ye confidently left the task to Old Zhang.

The agent held a very special position in the entertainment industry. It could be said that they were the celebrity's most intimate colleague and the most loyal representative. They could help the celebrity handle all sorts of matters, such as endorsements, advertisements, press interviews, and job arrangements. There was no need to emphasize how important an agent was. Every celebrity's agent was either selected in the strictest way, or they were the celebrity's most trusted relatives, like their mother, elder sister, or second aunt to begin with. Otherwise, they would have to be exceptionally capable like Zhang Yuanqi's manager, Fang Weihong. She was a renowned, elite agent in the industry who had become famous long before she became Zhang Yuanqi's manager.

Actually, Zhang Ye could opt for the latter choice, but he found it unsuitable for his situation.

Look for his relatives?

His mother or one of his aunts?

His paternal elder cousin or his maternal younger cousins?

None of them would fit!

His family members were just ordinary people who had not seen much of the world and were inexperienced in the things they might have to handle on his behalf. With Zhang Ye's notorious reputation in the industry and him getting into trouble so often, he did not want to let his relatives handle his affairs for him.

As for those highly reputed elite agents, he did not wish to hire them, and neither could he hire them. Many of the agents were directly contracted to the celebrities and would draw a percent commission from the celebrity's earnings. For a person like Zhang Ye who had never accepted any commercial appearances and was not likely to accept them in the future, which elite agent would want to work for him? Ignoring the fact that the agent would not be earning much, just the trouble brought about by Zhang Ye's temper would be enough to keep them busy. A low salary, a pile of work, and they might even get cursed at by other people. Only an idiot would take a job like that!

Hence, his favorite was still a rookie, who could at least help him handle some miscellaneous tasks. As for the other, more important matters? Zhang Ye could handle them by himself.

...

The next day.

Early in the morning.

Zhang Yuanqi's manager, Fang Weihong, sent him an email with a list of the candidates!

Although Old Zhang's temperament in private wasn't too good, her efficiency in getting things done was still very high. Zhang Ye did not have to worry that she would forget about the favor that he had requested from her.

More than ten résumés arrived in his inbox!

Li Han: Female, 27 years old with 4 years' experience in the industry.

Han Fang: Female, 29 years old with 6 years' experience in the industry. Former agent of Huo Dongfang.

Zhao Minli: Female, 25 years old. Rookie with 1 year of experience in the industry. Very capable and had just left her previous position at a communication and media agency.

Zhang Ye scanned through the résumés one by one and was very satisfied with every one of them. Actually, he did not really understand them as this was his first time doing something like this. He did not feel that anyone was worse than anyone else, which gave him with an even greater dilemma. Later, he even got his parents to help him look at the résumés together. As a professional agent, she'd also need to handle some parts of a celebrity's private life. Therefore, Zhang Ye valued his parents' opinions very much as they would come across each other often in

the future.

His father pointed at one of them. "This person seems alright."

"Come on." His mother disagreed and pointed to another person. "This one is better; she looks rather big-hearted. One look at her and you can tell that she's a very capable person."

Zhang Ye said, "That so?"

His mother urged, "Check with her!"

"Uh, alright." Zhang Ye agreed since he did not have any opinion either.

Zhang Ye picked up the phone and called the candidates he had shortlisted.

"Hello, is this Ms. Zhao Minli?"

"Yes, this is she. May I know who's calling?"

"It's Zhang Ye."

"Ah, Teacher Zhang, hello, hello!" The woman on the other end of the line sounded very excited. "Sister Fang mentioned this to me. She asked me about my current job situation, as well as my

opinion of you. I never expected that you would actually contact me. Let me introduce myself briefly then. I just left my position at my previous agency, so I have no contractual obligations right now. I can accept being contracted to you as an exclusive agent. You can put that as a term in the contract and I won't have any problems with it."

"I seldom accept commercial appearances. Are you OK with that?"

"Ummm...how seldom is seldom?"

"I basically never accept them."

"Uh, that's not a problem. Can we meet up to discuss this?"

"Sure, let's schedule a time."

After chatting for a while, Zhang Ye felt quite satisfied with her.

He then called the next person.

"Hello, is this Ms. Han?"

"Hur hur, are you Teacher Zhang?"

"You can recognize my voice?"

"I'm very familiar with your voice."

"I'm looking for an agent, and Sister Fang recommended you to me. Before we discuss other things, I'd like to get to know you a bit more, and also find out if you have any requests."

"I don't have many demands, except that upon contracting, I would like to receive a higher percent commission, at 30% of the earnings."

"Is that so?"

"If you have a talent agency, the agency will assign you an agent while they take a percentage for the commission. If I am your personal agent, I'd have to use my own network to get work done. Therefore, I would definitely need to receive a higher percent commission. As for the exact details, we can discuss further."

"Sure."

As he contacted the shortlisted agents, he did not know of the buzz that had started in the talent agency business!

...

At a talent agency.

"Hey, did you hear? Zhang Ye is looking for an agent!"

"I just heard about it too!"

"Now this is a good opportunity!"

"Aiyo, I would like to apply too!"

"Then you'd have to quit first. He's hiring a personal agent!"

"I don't mind quitting. I'm mainly afraid that I'm not qualified enough."

"There's nothing good about being Zhang Ye's agent anyways. Don't you guys know him by now? He has never accepted any commercial appearances, so there's basically no money to be earned!"

"I'd still be willing! He's an A-list celebrity!"

"Yeah, my career highlights would be glossed up and in the future when I say that I was once the agent of an A-list celebrity, who wouldn't scramble to employ me? My résumé would have thickened!"

...

At a private gathering of some agents in the business.

"So Zhang Ye is looking for an agent?"

"Yeah, I heard Sister Fang Weihong helped him spread the word."

"This is a very good opportunity!"

"Yes, among the current A-list celebrities, only Zhang Ye does not have an agent yet. I wonder who will get the job! Hai, too bad my contract is tied to the agency. Otherwise, I would have applied too!"

...

Almost everyone in the business knew about this now!

This industry was neither big nor small. There weren't many secrets in the industry, especially if it concerned an A-list celebrity like Zhang Ye. Every move of his would attract the attention of many others!

At once, quite a number of agents in the industry tried to contact Zhang Ye or Fang Weihong. Their demands were gradually getting lower than the last!

"I don't have any demands!"

"I am willing to take a commission of only 10%!"

"I can take 7%!"

"5% for me!"

"I don't need any commission at all! A working salary will do!"

The number of applicants increased by the second. In the end, they were almost fighting to outdo each other in terms of their demands. Everyone was using all means possible to try to secure this job!

Zhang Ye did not expect that he would be so popular. Initially, he thought that no one would willingly be his agent since he did not accept commercial appearances and often got into a lot of trouble, but it seemed like he had underestimated his current fame. There were even some very prominent, established agents in the industry who found ways to contact him to reveal their intentions of willingly becoming his agent, and also to express some of their requests to him.

Zhang Ye was spoilt for choice!

This is good!

This one is not bad either!

So who should be chosen?

Chapter 950: A martial arts action star warns against Zhang Ye!

"Zhang Ye looking to hire agent!"

"Competition in the talent agency business heats up!"

"Who will end up as Zhang Ye's agent?"

Online, some media outlets had also posted news updates about the situation. Some of the more meticulous reporters even made a chart of talent agents for comparison in a special coverage of the business. They listed some of the current statuses and contributions of agents to celebrities like Zhang Yuanqi, Huo Dongfang, Ning Lan, etc., and took the opportunity to comb through the standing of the talent agency business.

The netizens were very happy.

"Haha!"

"Teacher Zhang has finally been enlightened!"

"Quickly hire someone. Let's see who'll get chosen!"

"Being Teacher Zhang's agent won't be an easy job!"

"Yeah, it's going to be quite difficult!"

"With Zhang Ye's social relationships, the pressure on his agent within the industry will surely be the greatest! After every fight that Teacher Zhang gets himself into, his agent will have to handle the media. I doubt just anyone could handle that!"

"They'd also have to be careful not to get beaten up!"

"Pfft, that's right!"

"Teacher Zhang attracts too much hatred from within the industry!"

Although some things were only meant to be jokes, no one could have expected those jokes to actually come true!

Though no one knew which private gathering it had originated from, nor who had leaked it, a piece of news posted online stirred up a huge reaction! A very popular martial arts action star had actually issued a warning publicly: Whoever dares to take the job as Zhang Ye's agent would get "fixed" by him!

Jiang Hanwei!

An A-list celebrity in the domestic market!

The best martial arts action star in the country!

A famous movie star whose appeal at the martial arts movies' box office was unparalleled. As long as it was a movie that he starred in, the box office earnings would be at least one hundred million RMB! He was the most famous kung fu star in the industry with no one coming close to him! Not only that, he was also a true martial arts expert who had won first place in the National Youth Wushu Championships when he was just 16 years old. This was followed by many other martial arts awards as well, making him a big shot celebrity who actually knew real kung fu! In the A-list Celebrity Rankings, his position was also higher than Zhang Ye!

As a big shot of the big shots, he had actually stated something like that so publicly. This left many netizens in disbelief after they found out!

What did he mean by "fixing" whoever dares take the job?

Did that mean he would beat up whoever became Zhang Ye's agent?

Jiang Hanwei was known for being quite temperamental, not like how Zhang Ye was, instead more hot-tempered. Since he'd debuted, he had beaten up many, many people. He had beaten up reporters, assistant directors, fellow celebrities on set, and some troublemaking fans in his time. As a result, everyone in the industry knew about Jiang Hanwei's temper and most people would not risk angering him. He was a big brother of the entertainment industry after all!

That was why the netizens were shocked!

"Holy fuck!"

"What happened?"

"Why did Jiang Hanwei suddenly pop out of nowhere?"

"What is wrong with Teacher Jiang?"

"W-Why is he picking a fight with Zhang Ye?"

"This should just be a rumor, right?"

"Yeah, I feel that way. Why would Teacher Jiang issue such a threatening statement?"

"Yeah, from what I know, he shouldn't have any animosity for Zhang Ye?"

"Who can tell me what's going on?"

"Jiang Hanwei is being too overbearing, isn't he? Fuck, what makes him think he can stop others from hiring an agent? What logic is that? Who does he think he is? The boss of the entertainment circle?"

"That's how he always behaves, handling everything like one would in a fight!"

"He's borne from a martial arts background after all. If he says he will 'fix' someone, then that person will most definitely be 'fixed'!"

"Fuck, do you think that Teacher Zhang is afraid of you?"

"Who the fuck are you!"

In an instant, the netizens were seething!

Perhaps even the person who started this did not expect it to blow up this much!

Although the veracity of this news was still unconfirmed, the fans treated it as if it were real. On Weibo, Zhang Ye's and Jiang Hanwei's fans immediately got into an argument!

Zhang Ye's fans: "Motherfuckers!"

Jiang Hanwei's fans: "You motherfuckers!"

Zhang Ye's fans: "Do you people think you own the entertainment industry?"

Jiang Hanwei's fans: "Teacher Jiang must surely have an issue

with that Zhang fellow. Since Teacher Jiang has said something like that, there must be a good reason. Are you people unconvinced?"

Zhang Ye's fans: "You all think you're really awesome, don't you?"

Jiang Hanwei's fans: "We've always been this awesome! You got a problem with that?"

There were also many who came to mediate the situation!

"Calm down, everyone!"

"The news might not be true!"

"There's a lot of rumors flying around these days!"

...

At home.

Even Zhang Ye thought that the news wasn't true, so did not take it seriously.

But several phone calls later, he began to think otherwise!

Chen Guang was the first to call. "When did you offend Jiang Hanwei?"

Zhang Ye was slightly taken aback, but laughed. "You've been duped by the rumor too?"

"You didn't offend him?" Chen Guang said in surprise.

Zhang Ye replied, "I don't even know him, so how could I have offended him? At most, I've heard of his name and have seen several of his martial arts movies. That's all."

Chen Guang went silent for a moment, then warned, "Well, just be careful. He really walks the walk!"

"Ha?" Zhang Ye found this comical.

Next, Zhang Yuanqi's manager, Fang Weihong called!

The moment he answered the call, Fang Weihong asked, "Did you offend Old Jiang?"

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, "I haven't even met him before!"

Fang Weihong mused, "I'm still helping you find an agent, but you'd better not hold out much hope for now. I think it will be difficult to find one in the near future."

Zhang Ye was quite exasperated. "What do you mean, Sister Fang?"

"Old Jiang is considered a big brother in the industry, and even though he has offended some people before, he has helped out many celebrities. Therefore, everyone acknowledges his position in the industry, and he's also very popular with everyone. Now that he's issued a warning against you and made this threat, it's quite possible that you'll really be in some trouble. As long as it's someone in the industry, who would dare be your agent under such circumstances? You'd have to at least wait until this blows over. Do you really not know what happened?" Fang Weihong asked again.

Zhang Ye returned, "Oh, so you mean this isn't actually a rumor?"

"What rumor!" Fang Weihong related, "It's already spread throughout the entertainment industry! Those words were shouted by Old Jiang at a party! And his original words were not even that nice. He didn't say that he would 'fix' your agent, he just said that whoever dares to become your agent will get beaten up by him!"

Zhang Ye narrowed his eyes. "Is that so?"

Fang Weihong sighed. "In any case, just be careful. He's not someone to be trifled with. I still have some influence in the industry, so let me help you ask around first and see if this

problem can be resolved amicably."

But when Zhang Ye heard that, he spoke up, "It's alright, Sister Fang. I'll settle this myself!"

Zhang Xia's call came in!

"Little Zhang, what's happening?"

"I don't know."

"Is it a rumor?"

"I think it's real."

Yao Jiancai also heard about it!

Dong Shanshan gave him a call as well!

Zhang Ye's friends were all quite surprised. They didn't know why Jiang Hanwei had suddenly picked a fight with Zhang Ye, so all of his friends called to show their concern for him! This was because the person who had picked a fight with Zhang Ye this time was not some unknown. It wasn't like those little-known athletes or crosstalk comedians like Tang Dazhang who did not have many fans. This was a genuinely recognized A-list martial arts action star who was even more popular than Zhang Ye! In the entertainment industry, such public disagreements between A-list celebrities

were virtually unheard of. But when they occurred, the gravity of the situation would not be light!

Before long, Zhang Ye started receiving updates from those talent agents he had contacted earlier!

From the first person:

"Teacher Zhang."

"Hey, Ms. Xu."

"I've fallen sick recently and feel quite bad, so I'll be hospitalized for a while. Umm...let's take a rain check on our meeting. I'm terribly sorry."

"Oh, it's fine. Your health is more important. Do take care of yourself."

From the second person:

"Teacher Zhang."

"Yes?"

"I've considered for a while, but I think that I won't be able to qualify as your agent with my current skill set."

"That's fine."

"My apologies."

From the third person:

"Teacher Zhang, I think I won't be able to meet you in the afternoon."

"What's the matter?"

"Teacher Jiang Hanwei's position in the industry is too high, and I'm just a small-timer, so I..."

"Understood, no worries."

"I'm so sorry."

Everyone was rejecting his offer now!

None of them dared to take the job as Zhang Ye's agent!

Jiang Hanwei's threat was too ruthless. For many of these talent agents, getting beaten up would be considered getting off lightly and it wasn't as bad as it sounded. But realistically, it wasn't going to be as simple as just getting beaten up. They were more likely to get

several beatings instead, or even not be able to make a living in the industry. Applying for the role of agent that they didn't even know if they would get was simply too risky. And it might even cut short their talent agent careers? No one was willing to take the risk! If it were for the role of Zhang Yuanqi's manager, then it wouldn't matter. With Sister Zhang's reputation in the entertainment industry, Jiang Hanwei would never dare to issue such threats. Even if he did, no one would care because Sister Zhang would most assuredly back them up! But it wasn't the same for Zhang Ye. This fellow's social ties were too poor, and he had few connections or friends to depend on. Compared to Jiang Hanwei, it was clear that Jiang Hanwei was the more oppressive figure! His words definitely held more weight!

His parents also found out about this!

His mother immediately flew into a rage. "Jiang Hanwei? I used to rather like his kung fu movies! That old bastard, based on what is he restricting my son from hiring an agent?"

His father, usually mild-mannered, was also enraged. "Isn't he taking it too far?"

His mother said, "Keep searching, just continue looking for an agent! I doubt that he really dares to beat anyone up!"

Zhang Ye said calmly, "The agents I shortlisted earlier have already rejected me for the interview."

"What?" When his mother heard that, she cursed even more

harshly, "Has my son goddamn offended you or something?"

Zhang Ye was also thinking about this.

Jiang Hanwei?

A martial arts action star?

A martial artist?

Soon, he reached a plausible conclusion. Zhang Ye went online to research Jiang Hanwei's history. Everything was available online and was no secret at all!

Jiang Hanwei turned out to be a former disciple of the Huashan Sect, and was Fan Wen's sixth disciple. He had studied under Fan Wen for three years beginning at the age of eight, but then left the sect due to some unknown reason and went into the world to fulfill his own ambitions. He was no longer a disciple of the Huashan Sect, but after he became famous, he donated quite the sum to the Huashan Sect for repairs. It seemed like he intended to rejoin the Huashan Sect back then, but they did not accept him back. Perhaps it was because they just didn't want to take him back, or that something had happened all those years ago. Whatever the reason, it was unclear. But there were rumors that Jiang Hanwei's current martial arts skills were even better than Fan Wen's!

A former disciple of the Huashan Sect?

Zhang Ye sneered!

So this was the reason!

So this was the root cause?

Chapter 951: Rao Aimin comes to visit!

On the same day, the more the news spread, the more exaggerated it became!

"I heard it was because Zhang Ye took a show from Jiang Hanwei!"

"What? I heard that it was because Jiang Hanwei found Zhang Ye to be an eyesore and wanted to repress him a little!"

"I heard someone say that it was because Zhang Ye had offended too many people and did not know the 'rules' of the industry. After he reached his current status, he did not even pay his respects to Jiang Hanwei as one of the big brothers, so Jiang Hanwei decided to make things difficult for him!"

"Stop making things up! Those are all rumors!"

"Fuck, there's too much information about this news now!"

"Does anyone know what is going on? Does anyone have any information on what is really happening?"

"I checked with a friend in the industry. He said that Jiang Hanwei really did say those words, but no one seems to know what kind of animosity they have!"

"Is this true?"

"It's true and has been confirmed!"

"Can't you see how the involved parties did not come out to refute the rumors?"

"Yeah, if the news were wrong, someone would have come out to clarify!"

"Those applicants have all gone quiet! No one dares to be Zhang Ye's agent!"

The news was confirmed!

Zhang Ye's and Jiang Hanwei's fans fought even harder!

The entertainment industry had been quite peaceful recently, with no major events occurring. As such, this dispute made it to the headlines! Be it the common folk or the media, everyone was delighted to know that there was a feud between these celebrities. Their enthusiasm for it was even greater than for the news of a Heavenly Queen accepting a role on a new movie project and a Heavenly King releasing a new song. This was human nature. Everyone had a gossip side!

The reporters were also flocking over in full strength!

Zhang Ye could not be contacted!

Jiang Hanwei could not be contacted!

However, someone managed to contact Jiang Hanwei's agent.

"Hello, I'm a reporter with the Beijing Times!"

"Oh, what's the matter?"

"Can you tell me what grudges Teacher Jiang and Teacher Zhang have for each other?"

"No comment."

"Wait, I—"

Du du, the call was cut off.

Then the cell phone of Jiang Hanwei's agent was turned off.

But the more it became like this, the more excited the reporters became. Their keen sense of news reporting told them that there was certainly much more to the story. The way it was handled confirmed the authenticity of the news even further!

But as for Zhang Ye?

How would Zhang Ye handle this?

The reporters waited with bated breath!

The atmosphere in the entertainment industry became very tense!

An A-list celebrity publicly issuing a warning against another A-list celebrity!

This was a fight between the gods!

This had not been seen in many years!

Numerous people from the entertainment industry were also waiting to see how Zhang Ye would react. After all, Jiang Hanwei was very special, his status illustrious and prestigious!

Very soon, Zhang Ye made a response!

This response left the entire entertainment industry in a state of shock!

Zhang Ye had given a call to Yao Jiancai.

"What's the matter, Little Zhang?" Yao Jiancai asked.

Zhang Ye got straight to the point. "Old Yao, you've been around the entertainment industry for many years, so you're quite familiar with how it works. Help me spread these words to the industry!"

Yao Jiancai was stunned. "What do you want to say?"

Zhang Ye answered: "Just help me spread word of my response....Say that I said, 'What are you acting all high and mighty for!'"

Yao Jiancai was speechless. "What are you trying achieve!"

Zhang Ye said: "Just say that!"

"Are you sure?" Yao Jiancai asked nervously.

Zhang Ye nodded. "I'm very sure!"

Yao Jiancai was very familiar with this temper of his long-time crosstalk partner. "Alright then."

Soon after, Zhang Ye's words were spread throughout the entertainment industry!

Fang Weihong was at a loss for words!

Chen Guang was speechless!

Fan Wenli gasped!

The others in the industry were astounded!

"What are you acting all high and mighty for!"—No one had expected Zhang Ye to use this fierce a method to start the war with Jiang Hanwei! They were really going fight!

...

Elsewhere.

Jiang Hanwei's house.

It was a villa. Jiang Hanwei was in the lounge discussing some fight choreography in a movie with two of the martial arts choreographers and a martial arts double on his team.

His agent, Wan Yi, walked over and whispered some words to him.

Jiang Hanwei belly laughed. "Great! Tell him to watch out!"

Wan Yi nodded.

"Brother Jiang, what's the matter?" one of the martial arts choreographers asked.

That martial arts double blinked several times. "Is it about Zhang Ye?"

Jiang Hanwei mocked, "I've been in this business for over 20 years! But a rookie who has only been in the industry for 2 years dares to say such things to me?"

Wan Yi asked, "Brother Jiang, just what is going on between you and Zhang Ye?"

"Stop asking." Jiang Hanwei bluntly said, "This is a blood feud!"

Wan Yi nodded. "I understand. I'll inform the industry and use my social ties to guarantee that Zhang Ye won't find anyone as his agent! No one will want to work for him!"

Jiang Hanwei grunted in approval!

Suddenly, a veteran from the actors' union called.

"Old Jiang."

"Oh, it's Old Bro Zhou."

"I'm calling to sort things out."

"Hur hur, then please stop talking."

"Why are you picking a fight with Zhang Ye? Let it go, alright? I know Little Zhang's agent, Little Fang, quite well. She asked me to help you two reconcile. You're both big shot A-list celebrities, so don't get so ugly. Otherwise, people will laugh at us. If you two continue with this fighting, both of you will suffer."

"Old Bro Zhou, you don't know the whole story."

"Old Jiang."

"No need to speak further. Ha, I'll buy you a drink when next we meet!"

Following, another person called to mediate things. It was songstress Zhang Xia.

"Little Jiang, it's been awhile, right?"

"Oh, Auntie Zhang. I think we haven't met since that year's Spring Festival Gala."

"I know you and Little Zhang pretty well. Do things have to be like this? Give me some face and let it rest."

"I really can't do that."

"No matter what, you can't stop Little Zhang from getting an agent, right? Isn't this unreasonable?"

"Please don't continue. It's not that I don't want to give you any face, but I really can't do that no matter who tries to mediate!"

Jiang Hanwei fended off all those calls for mediation!

Just like he said, it was useless for anyone to try to mediate!

Jiang Hanwei only wanted to make Zhang Ye looked bad! He had many things he couldn't tell anyone because there were just too many things in the Chinese martial arts world that people did not know about. He had no way of saying it nor did he have the right to say it. Ultimately, he was just a former disciple of the Huashan Sect. As for why he dared to say such things to Zhang Ye, Jiang Hanwei naturally did not think that his own martial arts were better than Zhang Ye's. In his opinion and based on rumors, the two of them would at most fight to a draw (in his own imagination), which was the best case scenario. Of course, as they had not encountered each other before, the actual events could turn out much worse. Who knew if Jiang Hanwei could even take ten attacks from Zhang Ye! But the problem now was that Jiang Hanwei did not plan to fight Zhang Ye in the ring. There was no need for that!

A duel?

A fight in the ring?

What day and age did they live in!

However, Jiang Hanwei was not uncompromising. From a certain perspective, he was not rigid at all. He could not interfere with the affairs of the Chinese martial arts world nor help out in any way, but this was not the Chinese martial arts world. This was the entertainment industry, and he was one of the few celebrities with the highest of reputations! So why was there a need to duel Zhang Ye? This was not the place to duel in the ring. Zhang Ye and he were both A-list celebrities, so they couldn't possibly fight in the ring to decide the victor and make the person who lost admit defeat, right? This wasn't some children's game! This was a lawful society and the usual practices of the Chinese martial arts world were not really applicable here. Every profession had its own rules and regulations. In the entertainment industry, the fight depended more on one's fame, reputation, aggressiveness, and savviness! Despite the fact that Zhang Ye had defeated all the large sects when their strongest were down, he would guarantee that the Zhang fellow would not get past him in the entertainment industry! He was confident that with just a word of his, Zhang Ye would be completely quashed by him. At the least, he could make Zhang Ye be unable to find an agent!

Your martial arts are great? You can fight? What's the use of that!

You may be very good at fighting, but can your agent fight well too?

If I can't beat you in a physical fight, Zhang Ye, then the dozens of brothers of my Jiang Hanwei Stunt Team will be more than enough to take care of your agent! Frankly, I will make your agent get into a small accident and get injured. Even if the police come, they would have nothing on me! Who would still dare to be your agent then? I will beat them whenever I see them! You think I've been involved in the entertainment industry for this long without anything to show for? Saying that I was acting all high and mighty with you? I'll fucking act all high and mighty with you today then! I'll declare my intentions clearly here!

What can you do about it?

...

Back in Beijing.

At Zhang Ye's parents' house.

Very quickly, Zhang Ye received word of Jiang Hanwei's message!

"Just watch out?"

Zhang Ye was tickled by that. He knew that he could not beat me, so he spread the word to deal with my agent instead? Make everyone afraid of applying for the job? But Zhang Ye had to admit that even though Jiang Hanwei's move was nefarious, it was

actually very effective. Up until now, there was no more news from those agents recommended by Fang Weihong whom he had contacted earlier!

His mother was so angry that she scolded Jiang Hanwei the entire morning. Finally, she asked, "Son, is there any news regarding the agent position?"

"No." Zhang Ye shook his head.

His father frowned. "Not even a single applicant?"

Zhang Ye responded, "Not even one."

His mother said angrily, "Why are they all so easily scared off? How can there not be any competition to become the agent of an A-list celebrity? There should at least be some people who are not afraid of trouble, right?"

His father sighed. "That Jiang Hanwei can be very arrogant in the industry. I heard that he's a veteran whose code of brotherhood is very strong, and he has beaten up several people in the past. He is similar to Little Ye in that he is the type of person who will beat someone up if he says he will do so. The applicants for the agent position are only trying make a living, so they do not see the need to take such risks. Who isn't afraid of getting beaten up anyway?"

His mother said angrily, "Does he have any regard for the law?"

His father said, "People like them have plenty of underhanded methods they can use!"

Suddenly, the doorbell rang!

His mother shouted to the outside, "Who is it?"

"Grandma, it's me." It was Chenchen's voice!

His mother, who was raging a moment ago, immediately perked up. "Yo, it's Chenchen!"

Zhang Ye blinked!

Rao Aimin and Chenchen were here!

Chapter 952: Old Rao, why don't you be my agent!

Noon.

Guests had come to visit Zhang Ye and his family.

His parents opened the door to welcome them. "Chenchen, did you miss Grandpa and Grandma?"

Chenchen made a noise in affirmation, then asked, "Where's Zhang Ye?"

"Him? He's getting changed in his room," his mother answered with a chuckle.

Chenchen bounced to the small bedroom door and knocked on it with her little hand. "Zhang Ye, come out, I'm here."

Zhang Ye's voice came from inside the room. "Soon."

Chenchen knocked on the door again and badgered, "Zhang Ye, hurry up."

"I get it!" Zhang Ye was annoyed.

His father looked at the woman standing at the door. "You must

be Little Rao."

For once, Rao Aimin showed a smile. "How should I address the two of you?"

Over at Zhang Ye's rented apartment, his mother had met her twice before, so she knew her. "Anything is fine. Our age gap is not really that large, so you just call us Big Bro and Big Sis."

"OK," Rao Aimin said.

His mother beckoned her in. "Come in, come in and sit."

Rao Aimin had brought along quite a few fruits and gift boxes. "I heard from Chenchen that she gave you two a lot of trouble in the past six months. I didn't know what to get, so I just got a little something for you."

"Aiya, you didn't have to bring any gifts. You're too polite." His mother smiled and said, "When Little Ye was staying at your place, he caused you a lot of trouble too. You even cooked for him and offered him free rent, so we're very grateful to you as well. If not for your help back then, Little Ye would not have become this successful."

They exchanged some pleasantries.

At this moment, Zhang Ye, who had just changed out of his pajamas into casual wear, came out from his bedroom. "Yo, Big Sis

Rao, you're here." He patted Chenchen, who had stood at the door for a long while, on her little head when he came out.

They ate lunch at home.

Initially, his mother had wanted to cook for the guests, but Rao Aimin insisted on doing it instead, so his mother did not stop her!

His mother felt it was inappropriate. "How can we let our guest cook for us!"

But Zhang Ye did not mind. "Haha, Big Sis Rao's cooking is much better than yours."

At first, his mother did not believe him, but when the tableful of dishes were served, she was convinced!

The dishes were excellent in color, smell, and taste!

His mother praised, "The food is delicious!"

Rao Aimin said, "I just whipped up a few dishes, so please make do with them."

Without any words, Zhang Ye and Chenchen vied for the plate of red braised pork belly!

"Zhang Ye! Don't fight me!"

"I must!"

"This piece is mine!"

"Eat that piece instead! Don't mess around!"

"But this piece is marbled! I love eating it!"

"I love eating it as well!"

"Zhang Ye! You're not behaving like an adult!"

The two of them always fought during mealtime. Everyone was used to it. Whether it was Zhang Ye or Chenchen, they had not tasted Rao Aimin's cooking for almost half a year now. As such, they naturally couldn't resist!

His parents regarded the meal as secondary and mainly wanted to chat with Rao Aimin.

As they chatted, they got around to Zhang Ye's problems.

His mother said in frustration, "That Jiang Hanwei! Don't you think it's infuriating! My son did not step on his tail, but he went around spreading the word that he wanted to beat up my son's

agent! Does that make any sense at all?"

Rao Aimin looked at Zhang Ye. "Jiang Hanwei?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "It's that martial arts action star."

"He sounds familiar." Rao Aimin said, "I think I've met him before."

His mother was surprised. "You've met him before?"

Rao Aimin tried to recall, then said, "Many years ago. I don't really remember."

Jiang Hanwei was part of the Chinese martial arts world. Even if he wasn't a Huashan Sect member nowadays, he could still be considered as a non-affiliate, or more appropriately, had "set up" his own martial sect. He was currently doing even better than those people from the large sects, and had a big team of martial artists. Furthermore, Jiang Hanwei was a true martial artist himself and was very skilled as well. It could even be said that he was the most famous person in the entire Chinese martial arts world. Be it his kung fu or his popularity, they were all first-rate. As a result, Zhang Ye was not surprised to hear Rao Aimin say that she had once met him.

His parents were, on the other hand, rather surprised to hear this, because to them, Rao Aimin was just an ordinary woman who owned a lot of apartments. She seemed to not even have a job and

just relied on collecting rents for a living.

Rao Aimin asked, "Did he really issue a threat like that?"

Angered, his mother said, "Yeah, it's true! That old bastard! Does he think that my son is a pushover?"

"How is your son a pushover?" Rao Aimin glanced at Zhang Ye.

"Precisely!" His mother said, "Everyone knows that my son is not a pushover, yet he brazenly picked a fight. What do you think he's thinking? Don't you think he has nothing better to do?"

Chenchen looked up and interrupted, "Zhang Ye, show him what you're capable of."

"Show him what I'm capable of?" Zhang Ye said in amusement, "He must show me what he is capable of first!"

His mother complained, "Little Ye wanted to hire an agent because he was getting too busy with work, but that idea has to be scrapped now. The applicants for the agent position are all too scared to take the role now because they're afraid of getting beaten up! Jiang Hanwei's exact words were: 'I'll beat up whoever becomes his agent!' That was enough to scare off all of the potential applicants!"

Rao Aimin said, "With his martial arts skill? Who can he beat up?"

His father replied, "You might not know, but Jiang Hanwei is not just any martial arts action star. He's really skilled and knows real martial arts, and is also very good at it, unlike some others who only know how to put on a show!"

Rao Aimin did not say anything.

Chenchen claimed, "My aunt is more powerful!"

His mother said, "In your eyes, your aunt is definitely powerful, but Jiang Hanwei is—"

"That's enough, Mom. Just drop it," interrupted Zhang Ye

"What do you mean 'drop it'?" His mother rolled her eyes and said, "Can't you see that I'm talking right now?"

Zhang Ye pleaded, "Can you please talk about something else?"

His mother said, "Why would I talk about something else?"

Zhang Ye had no words.

The person sitting in front of you is the grandmaster of grandmasters in the Chinese martial arts world. It sounds like a joke when you keep blabbering about how Jiang Hanwei's kung fu is very good in front of a real grandmaster. Not even Zhang Ye

dared to boast about how powerful he had become when facing Rao Aimin!

Chenchen asked, "Zhang Ye, why are you looking for an agent?"

"To assist me in handling my work." Zhang Ye shrugged and said, "Your Uncle Zhang has become more famous now, so there are more people looking for me and giving me work. Even if I were superhuman, I couldn't handle the workload by myself. But even if I could, it wouldn't be good for me to handle it personally. It's hard for me to reject them flat out, so I need someone to represent me in the handling of these issues. Actually, there aren't many important matters anyway. Frankly, it's just to act as a shield for me."

Chenchen suddenly came up with an idea. "Then why don't you get my aunt to be your agent?"

Zhang Ye blinked and smiled. "That would be great, but I'm afraid that your aunt won't agree to it."

Chenchen looked at Rao Aimin and said, "Aunt, you have nothing to do at home anyway."

Rao Aimin looked at her. "Do I look that free to you?"

Chenchen and Zhang Ye nodded at the same time!

Rao Aimin couldn't muster up a reply.

Zhang Ye coughed and gave her serious look. "Honestly, Old Rao, why don't you be my agent? I would now like to ceremoniously and formally extend the invitation to you!"

In fact, a long time ago when someone brought up to Zhang Ye the subject of choosing an agent to help with his work, Zhang Ye had given it careful consideration. The first person who came to mind back then was Rao Aimin. First of all, she always stayed home with nothing to do and had a lot of free time on her hands. Second, she was very familiar with Zhang Ye and knew him very well, even to the point of having slept in the same bed several times. Third, Rao Aimin's temperament, character, and values were nearly identical to his. The two of them were seemingly carved from the same mold—their opinions on many topics were basically the same. If Zhang Ye were to turn into a drop-dead gorgeous woman, then he would definitely become Rao Aimin. And if Rao Aimin were to become a handsome lady-killer, then... Alright, then that would definitely not be Zhang Ye!

In short, Rao Aimin was Zhang Ye's most preferred candidate without any others coming close. But he knew that Old Rao had too high a status for the job, being a renowned...a notorious grandmaster who happened to own many apartments. She did not lack fame or fortune, so what was in it for her to be his agent? And that was why Zhang Ye asked for help from Zhang Yuanqi to help him find an agent at the beginning, as he did not know how to bring it up to Rao Aimin. But now that he had encountered an obstacle in Jiang Hanwei, who caused all those potential agents to turn down his offer, and since Chenchen had innocently brought up the subject, Zhang Ye went along with it!

However, his parents thought otherwise even as he felt this was the most logical way to do it.

His mom and dad recoiled at the thought.

His mother said angrily, "What are you saying! Won't you be bringing harm upon her!"

His father said hurriedly, "That won't do! Absolutely not!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Nothing will happen to Old Rao."

"What do you mean by nothing will happen!" His mother said angrily, "That Jiang fellow has threatened to beat up whoever your agent is! Yet you still want to hire Chenchen's aunt as your agent? The nerve you have! How can you allow such a gentle and beautiful woman to get beaten up in front of you?"

Gentle?

Was this woman all that gentle?

She's only friendly because our family has taken care of Chenchen for more than half a year, and she's showing her appreciation for our kindness. If it were toward any other people, see if she would bother acting gentle! I doubt even their dogs would welcome her at that time!

Get beaten up?

Yes, someone would get beaten up!

But it was unlikely that she'd be the one getting beaten up!

Zhang Ye ignored his parents and kept his eyes on Old Rao. "Just tell me, are you willing to do it?"

Chenchen helped to persuade her. "Aunt, go ahead and take the position."

Zhang Ye was thinking how this rascal was trying to find something for her aunt to be busy with so that her aunt wouldn't need to keep a constant eye on her studies and homework all day long.

His mother pushed him, not understanding why he was behaving so insensibly. She said to Rao Aimin, "Little Rao, ignore him! Let him slowly look for an agent by himself!"

Rao Aimin smiled without saying a word.

Zhang Ye repeated, "If you're willing, just say yes. If not, then forget it. I won't mention this again in the future, so just give it to me straight. Actually, if you become my agent, there isn't really much that you need to do. You just have to help me answer some calls, and deal with some advertisers, the media, and commercial appearances. In any case, I accept nearly none of them, so you can

just reject them all. You can stay with family and take care of your kid as you would. None of that would be affected. Oh right, I'll also be giving you a part of my earnings, but of course, there definitely won't be much."

After a short silence, Rao Aimin spoke, not to Zhang Ye, but rather to his parents, "If it were a year ago, I would definitely have ignored him as I have no interest in being involved with the entertainment industry. But now that my younger sister and brother-in-law's issue has been resolved, my years-long burden has been lifted from my shoulders. Your son helped me a great deal, but I won't elaborate on the details. I really owe him a monumental favor this time. And Chenchen being taken care of by your family for the past half a year is also another favor. I am normally an unreasonable person, but a favor must be repaid. It's only proper."

His mother was stunned. "But Jiang Hanwei is..."

Rao Aimin said nonchalantly, "Who does he think he is?"

Zhang Ye was getting excited. "Old Rao, then do you mean?"

Rao Aimin glanced at him and said, "I will accept being your agent for now. When you find a more suitable candidate in the future, I will step down. I'll just be your agent temporarily."

"Hahaha, sure!" Zhang Ye was enthused and excited!

He had done it!

He had really done it!

He really hadn't expected Old Rao to agree to this!

From here on out, they were going to proceed as a damn unbeatable team!

Chapter 953: Xiaodong's birthday invitation!

Afternoon.

Old Rao took Chenchen back home.

His mother immediately grumbled, "What are you trying to do?"

"Are you really going to let her take the risk?" His father heavily opposed his decision and criticized, "You're putting Little Rao right out in the open by making her your agent!"

Zhang Ye said, "Aiya, it will be fine."

His mother said, "What are you going to do if something bad happens?"

Zhang Ye said, "I can guarantee both of you that even if someone gets into trouble, she will be fine!"

His mother clicked her tongue and said, "What's with Little Rao? I told her that Jiang Hanwei is a martial artist and an expert one at that. Why didn't she listen!"

Ring, ring, ring!

A call came in!

Zhang Ye looked at the caller ID and saw that it was Wu Zeqing.

He immediately went back into his room to answer the call.

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "Hello, Old Wu. Haha."

Old Wu remarked: "Oh? In a good mood, are we?"

Zhang Ye replied: "Yeah, I just finalized something."

Old Wu gently said: "I just heard about your issue with Jiang Hanwei. What happened? Have you offended someone again?"

"I didn't offend him. Rather, he insisted on standing up for someone and tried to curry favor with them. I can't explain the problem in just a simple few words. I'll tell you in detail if there's a chance later." Zhang Ye had never hidden anything from Old Wu. There was no need to do so either. "I know why you're calling, and I was just about to call you as well. I can handle this problem myself, so please don't interfere. Your position is too high. If you get involved, it won't be fun anymore!"

Old Wu said: "Hur hur, what are you planning this time?"

Zhang Ye chuckled: "You'll find out soon enough."

"Alright then, I won't interfere," Old Wu agreed.

Zhang Ye smiled and said: "Just focus on your work. I'll deal with Jiang Hanwei personally this time!"

After hanging up, Zhang Ye was still in a very good mood because Rao Aimin had agreed to become his agent. After humming a ditty, he didn't feel satisfied, so he took out his cell phone and posted a very "attention-seeking" Weibo message!

The content of the Weibo post was very simple: The agent has been confirmed. Thanks for everyone's "concern"!

The word "concern" was even put into double quotation marks. It was obviously referring to the concern of a certain person!

When this Weibo post was posted, it caught many people off guard!

The netizens expressed their shock at this reveal.

"Ah?"

"He's found an agent already?"

"How'd he do it this fast?"

"Hahaha! Beautifully executed, Teacher Zhang!"

"Jiang Hanwei has just spread the word that he will beat up his agent and Zhang Ye has already found someone?"

"How face smacking!"

"Yeah, who was just saying that no one would apply for the position?"

"Who is it? How can they be so brave?"

"I don't know. Who's the agent?"

"They did not even feel threatened by Jiang Hanwei's words? Who is this divine agent?"

Before long, Zhang Ye's cell phone started ringing!

Fang Weihong said in surprise: "You've found someone already?"

Zhang Ye said: "That's right."

Fang Weihong asked: "Who is it?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "You wouldn't know even if I told you."

"Isn't it an agent from the recommendation list I gave to you?" Fang Weihong was extremely curious. She didn't understand how such an unpopular person like Zhang Ye could find an agent from somewhere else. Who had recommended the agent to him? Moreover, there was actually someone who paid no heed to the warnings and had gone against them under such circumstances?

Zhang Xia also gave him a call.

"Grandma Zhang."

"Who did you find?"

"You definitely won't know who it is, haha."

"I'm just afraid that you'll get them into trouble."

"Don't worry, everything will be fine."

"It's good that you found an agent. With your status, you really should let an agent handle things for you. Otherwise, how could you cope with so many things by yourself? How about this? I've known Little Jiang for many years, and I think he's gotten really out of hand this time. I'll help you in trying to talk him around again, so just leave it to me!"

"Grandma Zhang, I really appreciate your kindness, but there's

no need to."

"Then how are you going to handle things?"

"I have my ways."

...

At present.

The entire entertainment industry was also wondering!

Who on earth was Zhang Ye's agent?

Even Jiang Hanwei was stunned when he heard the news!

At Jiang Hanwei's house.

He immediately called over his own agent!

Wan Yi said, "Brother Jiang."

Jiang Hanwei looked furious. "Find out who it is! Make sure you find out!"

"Yes!" Wan Yi said solemnly.

Infuriated, Jiang Hanwei swore, "Fuck! I want to see who has the courage to disregard my face! How dare they charge at me at this time? Are they tired of living? Do they really consider me, Old Jiang, a peaceful man? And consider my words bullshit? Search! Who it is, their name, which talent agencies they've worked at! Get me all that info!"

"Understood!" Wan Yi went off to get it done. He immediately made around eight phone calls.

Showing disrespect to Brother Jiang?

You're trying to die!

...

Meanwhile, many industry insiders were inquiring about this news!

Because of a single Weibo post by Zhang Ye, many people's curiosities were piqued!

"Hello, Old Wang!"

"Hey, what's up?"

"Do you know who Zhang Ye's agent is?"

"I don't know."

"Even you don't know anything?"

"No, I'm also confused over this announcement!"

...

"Hello, Old Chen. Did any of your agency's agents resign?"

"No! I've already asked them!"

"What about the others?"

"No news, nothing!"

"No one knows anything? How is that possible!"

"Who knows where Zhang Ye found this person!"

...

Many people used their connections, but couldn't discover anything!

Even Jiang Hanwei, with his influence in the entertainment industry, could not dig up any information!

There was no news!

Be it the well-known agents of the industry or the unknown rookies, there were no signs that any of them were going to be Zhang Ye's agent. Hence, the identity of this person made everyone wonder. It was as if said agent had appeared out of nowhere and suddenly popped into the picture! Everyone was caught by surprise!

Was it because they were exceptionally good at keeping a low profile?

Or was it because they were afraid of Jiang Hanwei, and therefore did not risk showing themselves?

But that couldn't be. Since that person had the courage to become Zhang Ye's agent, Jiang Hanwei would find out sooner or later. There was no point in keeping a low profile like this; rather, it was a sign of weakness, so it shouldn't be the case here. Furthermore, the industry itself was not that big and the people within would know very quickly when something happened. If you did not know? If he did not know? Then someone was bound to know something about it. But even so, there was not a single piece of news regarding this. This probably meant that the person was not from the talent agency business!

A lot of people were already forming their own judgment!

It must be a relative of Zhang Ye's!

His mother?

Or his father?

This was the only possible reason why the industry did not receive any news, and also why that person refused to give any face to Jiang Hanwei! This explained everything!

At a small gathering.

Several new celebrities were whispering.

"This move by Zhang Ye was in truth very beautifully done."

"Yeah, there are a few reasons he had a relative be his agent. First, he can retaliate against Jiang Hanwei. Second, if Zhang Ye's agent turns out to be his father or mother, then no matter what, Jiang Hanwei likely wouldn't go and beat up his parents. Unless there's a deep hatred between them, he wouldn't go to the extent of beating up his parents, right?"

"When you put it like that, it makes sense!"

"So Zhang Ye actually has a strategy!"

"The problem now has been pushed back into Jiang Hanwei's court!"

"This match is very exciting to watch. Let's see which of them can win the next game. Right now, the focus of the entire entertainment industry is upon this fight of theirs!"

If someone could think of this, then others would naturally come to a similar conclusion as well.

But when a lot of the people in the entertainment industry surmised this was the case and thought that Jiang Hanwei would be left in a difficult position, he made another declaration!

He didn't care who it was!

He would keep his word!

These two sentences were leaked by a very reputable director of the industry. That director was very close with Jiang Hanwei, so the credibility of it was almost absolute!

No one could have thought that Zhang Ye would be so stubborn!

And no one could have thought that Jiang Hanwei would be likewise!

At once, the atmosphere of the entire entertainment industry was frozen again!

"Holy shit!"

"They really aren't going to let this rest!"

"What are Zhang Ye and Jiang Hanwei trying to do?"

"Just what feud is there between the two of them?"

"They're both big shot A-list celebrities. Are they really going to fight to the death?"

"Even if Zhang Ye's relative is his agent, Jiang Hanwei will still beat them up?"

"They're locked in battle! Neither is willing to take a step back!"

With things getting out of hand, everyone in the entertainment industry knew about this incident. Everyone was now waiting to see how it would turn out!

It was at this moment that Zhang Ye received an invitation.

It was a call from the popular domestic idol group's team leader, Xiaodong!

Xiaodong immediately said when the call connected: "Zhang Ye, I've been trying to contact you since a while ago, but I never could get through to you. So you're back in Beijing? Perfect. Tomorrow's my birthday. You should come."

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "I don't think I should?"

Xiaodong asked: "Why not?"

Zhang Ye replied: "Don't you know how my social ties are? I don't really know many people, so why should I go?"

"I'll introduce you to them." Xiaodong said without explaining further, "No rejecting, you must come."

Zhang Ye considered it for a moment and thought that it didn't really matter to him anyway, so he said: "Fine."

Xiaodong was very happy to hear that. "Then it's settled. Oh right, I know about the situation between you and Uncle Jiang. Why did things turn out like this between the two of you? I don't care what happened, but I need to reconcile the two of you. My relationship with Uncle Jiang is extremely good. He even took me under his wing. What am I going to do if the two of you are fighting like this? Tomorrow, it'll be fine when I settle things for the two of you tomorrow! Don't you refuse my help! That's that then!"

Zhang Ye was just about to speak.

Du du du.

The call ended.

Zhang Ye shook his head helplessly. He knew that Xiaodong was just being nice. But the conflict between Jiang Hanwei and him was not going to be so easily resolved with just a few words.

On the same day, a copy of the invite list was released!

It was exposed by a small tabloid. No one knew where they got the guest list from!

Xiaodong's Birthday Banquet.

Time: Tomorrow.

Location: Yanqi Hotel.

Below was the list of attending guests. It was a long list comprising several dozen people who were all influential public figures in the entertainment industry. For example, there were the two other members of Xiaodong's idol group, a famous director, a famous screenwriter, several people from their music company, Xiaodong's girlfriends, and a few A-list celebrities like Huo Dongfang, Jiang Hanwei and...Zhang Ye!

When the guest list got out, it struck terror into the hearts of the industry personages!

What?

Jiang Hanwei?

Zhang Ye?

Both of them were going to be at Xiaodong's birthday celebration tomorrow?

What was the meaning of this? Wouldn't the two of them end up fighting?

On top of that, everyone in the industry knew that Jiang Hanwei's skills were all real martial arts. Everyone believed that if the two of them got into a real fight, Zhang Ye would definitely be the one getting beaten up!

Chapter 954: Car crash!

On the day of the birthday celebration.

Huairou, Yanqi Hotel.

A long way from the hotel, Zhang Ye was driving and talking on the phone.

"What are you going here for, Old Rao?"

"I want to go and have a look. Wasn't there someone who wanted to beat me up?"

"It's my friend's birthday today, so let me meet them first."

"Just wait for me."

"Hey, you're serious about coming?"

"Of course! Since someone has issued a threat to me, how can I not be there?"

"Check back later, alright? Wait for my call. If you really come, then I doubt the birthday celebration would be able to proceed. The entire event would definitely get disrupted and thrown into disarray!"

Zhang Ye didn't care who Jiang Hanwei was, but he still had to leave some face for Xiaodong.

At the venue.

The birthday celebration was slated to begin at noon, but at around 10 AM, the guests were already gradually arriving. Around the area, several groups of reporters were also here with seven or eight news reporting vans behind them.

Reporters showing up for such celebrity birthday celebrations was not an unusual sight. After all, any small or big events with many celebrities in attendance was still news for them. But today's event clearly did not have an air of normalcy to it. Too many reporters had showed up! There were entertainment reporters from the newspapers, reporters from Beijing Television, and reporters from Central TV News Channel. From the emptied bottles and drink packets lying on the ground, many of these reporters had probably been waiting since early in the morning. Everyone's purpose today was likely the same: They were all here because of the conflict between Jiang Hanwei and Zhang Ye!

"Why are they not here yet?"

"Take it easy. Just wait."

"A car's coming! A car's coming!"

"Eh, that's Chen Guang and Fan Wenli!"

"Let's go!"

"Go, go, go!"

A car was driving over from across the way. When the sharp-eyed reporters saw this, they swarmed it!

The car couldn't move forward as it got blocked.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli had no choice but to roll down their windows to tell the reporters, "Can you please make way for us?"

One of the female reporters quickly said, "Everyone knows that the two of you are good friends with Zhang Ye. Can you please tell us what is going on between him and Jiang Hanwei?"

Chen Guang gave a wry smile. "I'm not sure either."

A male reporter hurriedly said, "Do you think they'll attend the birthday bash?"

Fan Wenli smiled and said, "I suppose so."

All in all, the couple denied any knowledge of the dispute by giving noncommittal answers.

Behind them, Huo Dongfang's car also arrived.

A large wave of reporters once again surrounded a celebrity's vehicle!

"Teacher Huo!"

"Sect Leader Huo!"

"Do you know anything about the conflict between Zhang Ye and Jiang Hanwei?"

"What are they fighting over?"

"Does Teacher Jiang Hanwei really want to beat up Zhang Ye's agent?"

Huo Dongfang answered with a smile, "It must be gossip. Don't believe it."

A newspaper reporter said, "But hasn't the news already been confirmed?"

"I don't know about that." Huo Dongfang repeatedly shook his head. "Please, everyone, let me through. I need to get inside."

A reporter from a television station asked, "Then who is Zhang Ye's agent?"

Huo Dongfang replied, "I would like to ask the same."

The reporter said in surprise, "You don't know who it is either?"

More and more of the arriving celebrities were stuck at the main entrance.

As the hotel was a semi-open space, Xiaodong had already booked the entire place prior to today. The celebration was considered a private event and guests would require an invitation to get in. So the reporters, who weren't allowed in, could only block the entrance in the hopes of getting their questions answered.

Not long after, Xiaodong and the other two members of her group ran out of the hotel!

Their group's name was "Spring Garden." It was formed of three female members: Xiaodong was the group's leader, with the other two members being Li Xiaoxian and Amy. They were the most popular girl group in the country and their popularity ranking had always been at the forefront of the B-list rankings. They had been popular for many years, and if a good chance or opportunity came their way, they might even rise into the A-list.

The three members had very different styles. Xiaodong was more well-rounded, beautiful, mature, but also full of life. Li Xiaoxian

was comparatively quieter, and behaved and spoke appropriately at all times. On the other hand, Amy was more of a wild child who was sassier and sexier than the other two, and had a large number of fans chasing her!

When Li Xiaoxian came out, she said to the reporters, "Can everyone please make way for the guests to enter? Thank you for your cooperation."

Amy said, "Stop blocking the entrance!"

As a result of their appearance, the reporters rushed over and surrounded them.

"Teacher Xiaodong!"

"Is the guest list for your birthday celebration real?"

"When will Zhang Ye and Jiang Hanwei get here?"

"They're both quite close to you, so what do you make of this quarrel between them? Why did you invite both of them to your birthday bash?"

"Who is Zhang Ye's agent?"

"Teacher Xiaodong, reveal something to us, please!"

Their cameras and zoom lenses were all raised and ready.

Xiaodong first signaled to the hotel's security team to clear the area around the entrance, then brought all the reporters over to a different spot so that the guests could get into the hotel without any trouble. She then told them in all seriousness, "First, I would like to clarify something. Zhang Ye and Uncle Jiang are both very dear to me and have both helped me out before. About the argument this time, I dare say that it is only a rumor. At any rate, I haven't received such news. It must have been made up by someone and everyone else circulated it. From what I know, Zhang Ye and Uncle Jiang have never even met before, so how could they clash like that? This whole state of affairs is one big contradiction!"

The reporters all nodded in agreement.

Right, these two men really hadn't ever met before!

So how could things suddenly escalate so relentlessly between them?

Xiaodong continued, "It's true that I invited both Teacher Zhang and Uncle Jiang today. But it's so that they can clarify things to put this matter to rest and keep this ridiculousness from spreading any further."

Li Xiaoxian added, "Right, it's all just hearsay."

Amy said with a laugh, "Don't believe those rumors! Later, when

Sister Dong officially introduces Uncle Jiang to Zhang Ye, she'll get them to take a picture together and will send it to you guys! That should be enough to dismiss all the gossip!"

Xiaodong coughed and stepped on Amy's foot.

When the reporters heard this, they got a little confused.

Take a picture together?

Could it really have been a rumor?

All their information was wrong?

Suddenly, someone shouted!

"He's here!"

"That's Zhang Ye's car!"

"Eh, whose car is beside his?"

"The other one belongs to Jiang Hanwei!"

"They came here together?"

The reporters were startled. They quickly picked up their cameras and snapped picture after picture!

There were even some people who rushed over to stop their cars, hoping to get an interview!

Xiaodong was also startled by this. She hadn't expected the two of them to happen to meet on the way in. But she quickly reacted and signaled to the hotel security to block the reporters. Then she stood there and beckoned for Zhang Ye's car and Jiang Hanwei's car to proceed straight into the hotel and not slow down. She was afraid that the reporters would surround them if their cars stopped there. That would expose a lot of behind-the-scenes issues and she would have no way to mediate the conflict after the fact!

Chen Guang smiled and waved.

Zhang Ye, who was driving, raised a hand in return. He greeted Old Chen and his wife.

Quite a few of the celebrities who were held up at the entrance earlier also waved at Jiang Hanwei's car while nodding and smiling to him. They were all very warm and polite toward his arrival.

"Teacher Jiang!"

"You've arrived?"

"Please go ahead, head in first!"

"There are too many people out here. Let's chat when we get inside!"

"Old Jiang, we must drink together today. I haven't had any with you in a while!"

Jiang Hanwei's car was a black BMW 7 Series. The car window rolled down slowly as he nodded to and greeted his old friends.

The celebrities successively restarted their cars to get ready to drive into the hotel.

At the main entrance, the hotel's security team had already cleared the way for the guests to proceed in.

Zhang Ye had just spotted the person in the car next to his. At the same time, Jiang Hanwei saw Zhang Ye in the BMW X5 beside his car. The two of them were taken aback and exchanged a look about a second long before looking away again.

Jiang Hanwei rolled up his car window and sneered.

Zhang Ye seemingly looked indifferent to this.

The two of them bumped into each other for the first time in this manner!

In the next moment, the two of them "bumped" into each other for the first time as well!

Due to Jiang Hanwei's status in the industry, those celebrities who had arrived earlier did not cut in front of him and instead waited for Jiang Hanwei and Zhang Ye to drive into the hotel first. And between those two cars, Zhang Ye's X5 was the one slightly ahead. Because the road leading up into the hotel's entrance was sloped, and since his car was an all-wheel drive crossover, he was clearly moving more smoothly. As such, according to his travel speed, Zhang Ye should have been the one entering the hotel first, followed by Jiang Hanwei.

But an accident occurred!

The interior of the car.

Jiang Hanwei told his driver, "Pass him!"

His chauffeur was a martial arts choreographer on his team. "Ah?"

Jiang Hanwei repeated, "Pass him!"

The driver challenged, "But there's only enough space for one car to enter at a time!"

"Alright, don't do it then!" Jiang Hanwei said sarcastically.

"Haha, OK, I know what to do!" After confirming his intentions, the driver broke into a smile. "Watch what I can do!"

Suddenly, the BMW 7 Series accelerated and sped forward. The engine revved loudly and scared everyone within hearing range!

After this, everyone was astonished to see Jiang Hanwei's car speeding past the other car. The road leading to the hotel's main entrance was already getting narrower up ahead and could only accommodate a single car at a time, but Jiang Hanwei's BMW still forcefully overtook the other car. Swerving, the rear bumper made light contact with the front of Zhang Ye's car as he cut Zhang Ye off!

They nearly collided!

But Jiang Hanwei's car still managed to get ahead at the end!

Jiang Hanwei laughed.

His driver and two other members of his stunt team also laughed.

Chen Guang frowned. "What are they trying to do?"

Fan Wenli said, "Jiang Hanwei is too hotheaded."

A female celebrity beside them said, "That's so dangerous! There

was nearly an accident!"

This passing maneuver was in fact very dangerous due to the fact that the hotel entrance was sloped, not a gentle gradient but shear. The height difference between the top and the bottom of the sloped side was about half a meter, so if the car did not manage to cut in front, it would have gone off the slope and possibly overturn. If it really did overturn, the damage to the car would be secondary while those who were in it would definitely get hurt. They might even be seriously injured!

The reporters were all stunned!

Xiaodong, Li Xiaoxian, and Amy were all getting anxious!

W-What is Uncle Jiang doing!

There are still so many reporters out there!

The other celebrities present were also stunned by what had happened. Some were amused. Those who were amused were the celebrities who had close ties with Jiang Hanwei and knew his temperament very well. You want to drive ahead of Old Jiang? Zhang Ye, do you think you're qualified to do so?

In an instant, the reporters became very excited. It was as though they had just spotted an opportunity to report on a headline piece of news, and tirelessly snapped away on their cameras in the direction of the entrance!

Jiang Hanwei was indeed Jiang Hanwei!

The big brother of the entertainment industry was still as domineering as ever!

Everyone was astonished, but not surprised at this. This was because Jiang Hanwei's temper had always been like this. He had also done similar things in the past as he had today. [Jiang Hanwei's name](#) was quite reflective of his character, considerably tougher and wanting to have the glory of being the first in everything that he did. As such, what he did today was very normal to those who knew him well.

Momentarily, everyone's focus was on Jiang Hanwei's car. Some of the reporters were already thinking of how to write today's entertainment news headlines after they got back to their offices.

However, everyone seemed to have forgotten about the person in the car behind Jiang Hanwei. It was the hooligan who had an even worse temper and reputation than Jiang Hanwei!

Zhang Ye was infuriated right there and then!

Motherfucker!

Zhang Ye had always been a reasonable person when handling things. At the National Martial Arts Conference, it was the Huashan Sect who had resorted to underhanded tactics first.

Zhang Ye and Rao Aimin nearly lost their lives at the time, so of course they wanted to seek a proper explanation from the Huashan Sect after the event. But you, Jiang Hanwei, you're just a former disciple of the Huashan Sect, so what business do you have? First, you issue a threat in the circle that you are going to beat up my agent, then you warn that you'll still do it even if the agent is my relative, and now you cut me off, and even scrape my car? If it weren't for my wide tires, my car would have flipped and rolled down the slope!

I've given you your fucking face!

Are you fucking done yet?

With a roar of the engine, Zhang Ye's X5 suddenly accelerated forward!

"Ah!"

"Zhang Ye's car is going!"

"What's going on?"

"W-What is he trying to do!"

"Heavens!"

This act caught everyone by surprise!

Jiang Hanwei's driver did not care. Instead, he steered in a serpentine pattern to block Zhang Ye's path, knowing that he wouldn't be able to pass him anymore. It was sheer provocation!

The martial arts choreographer in the front passenger seat turned back to look and said, "There's already no space on the road in front! It's only enough for a single car to pass through the entrance! Does he still want to pass us? Ha, does he intend to fly over us then?"

Zhang Ye approached!

Closer and closer!

In the blink of an eye, Zhang Ye's X5 was right behind them!

This time, it was the people in Jiang Hanwei's car who were panicking!

"Holy shit!"

"Why isn't that bastard slowing down?"

"Fuck!"

"He's about to collide with us!"

"That idiot is crazy!"

Jiang Hanwei was stunned!

The reporters were stunned!

Xiaodong was stunned!

Everyone present at the celebration was stunned!

Zhang Ye floored the accelerator and, scaring everyone out of their wits, rear-ended the BMW 7 Series in front of him. With a loud crash, the rear of the 7 Series visibly crumpled. Meanwhile, Zhang Ye's X5 didn't look like it had a scratch on it. His X5 was not just any ordinary X5, but a specially made bulletproof crossover! Zhang Ye then pushed Jiang Hanwei's car off the side of the slope!

Bam!

Clang!

Jiang Hanwei's car fell off the shear slope side, but did not flip over. The engine died!

In the car, a flurry of curses and swears rang out one after another!

"Zhang Ye!"

"Your grandpa!"

"Fuck!"

"Aiyo, my waist!"

Jiang Hanwei had hit his arm against something and was in so much pain that he blew up in anger!

At this moment, everything seemed to still!

No one expected Zhang Ye to actually crash into the car in front of him!

Chen Guang covered his face with his hands!

Fan Wenli wiped off the sweat on her forehead!

All of the other celebrities were staring with jaws dropped!

So this was Zhang Ye?

This was the infamous hooligan of the entertainment circle?

Holy fuck, what kind of person is he! So it turns out that there is actually someone in the entertainment circle more hotheaded than Jiang Hanwei?!

Zhang Ye then put his car into gear and turned the steering wheel and swaggered in through the hotel's main entrance!

The reporter who had questioned Spring Garden earlier looked at them with dumbfounded eyes. "Are you girls sure...that you can get the two of them to take a picture together later on?"

Xiaodong: "..."

Li Xiaoxian: "..."

Amy: "..."

This was big news!

There was no way it could be contained any longer!

汉 (hàn) has the meaning of being manly, 威 (wēi) has the meaning of wanting to display one's might and strength.

Chapter 955: Old Rao arrives!

Online.

News and photos of the incident started appearing all over the Internet!

"Not good!"

"Zhang Ye has caused trouble again!"

"Latest news update! Zhang Ye crashed into Jiang Hanwei's car!"

"This picture was taken at the scene of the crash! Quick, come and see! I'm gonna faint!"

"Fuck, what happened over there? Did they really start fighting?"

"I already said that if the two of them were to come together, something would definitely happen! Now look! Something has really happened! It has really happened just like I said it would!"

"What is that car Zhang Ye's driving?"

"It's the specially made bulletproof version of the X5!"

"How awesome! It's practically undamaged!"

"Why did it collide with the car in front?"

"I heard that it was over getting cut off. Jiang Hanwei cut Zhang Ye off and scraped the front of his car!"

"Zhang Ye is indeed Zhang Ye! Cutting people off? Scraping the front of someone's car? Trying to intimidate people? Zhang Ye does not resort to things like that. He will just take direct action! He will simply go ahead and crash into them! A lot of people have been lending their support to Jiang Hanwei recently. He's hotheaded? He mustn't be offended? Hur hur! Teacher Zhang's fans will surely laugh at that. From this crash alone, it already shows why Zhang Ye is proclaimed by everyone as the 'hooligan of the entertainment industry' instead of Jiang Hanwei!"

"Oh my god!"

"Looks like this will definitely lead to a fight between them!"

"What do you mean by 'lead to a fight'? They've already started the fight!"

"What's the state of affairs right now?"

"I don't know. The reporters can't get into the event!"

...

At the venue.

Inside Yanqi Hotel.

With the main entrance gates about to close, the rest of the celebration attending celebrities hurriedly drove inside. Some of them helped support Jiang Hanwei and company into their cars, checking to see if they were alright!

Zhang Ye had long since walked into the hotel.

When Chen Guang and Fan Wenli arrived on the hotel premises, they stepped out of their car and went inside immediately!

Followed by Huo Dongfang, Li Xiaoxian, and the others!

"Zhang'er! What were you thinking!" Chen Guang jogged up to him!

Zhang Ye looked at the group of them.

Fan Wenli also gave him lip. "Are you crazy? Why did you crash into him? There were so many reporters watching; why couldn't you have picked a better time instead? How can we settle this altercation now?"

Huo Dongfang said in a speechless manner, "That temper of

yours is really...hai!"

Li Xiaoxian didn't know how to react. "Teacher Zhang! You! You sure are..."

Amy ran in and hurriedly called out to Zhang Ye, "Teacher Zhang! Leave, please leave! Uncle Jiang and his people are making their way here! Sister Dong wants you to lay low for a while! Let her handle the rest!"

Zhang Ye said in amusement, "Why would I need to lay low?"

Li Xiaoxian said anxiously, "Uncle Jiang knows real martial arts! He was a national wushu champion! You crashed into him just now, so if the two of you get into a real fight, then..."

Chen Guang suddenly remembered this too, so he immediately said, "Yes, yes, you should go and hide for now."

But Zhang Ye simply ignored them. He even strolled to the cocktail table in this banquet hall and took something to drink.

Outside, the others were coming into the hall!

Xiaodong kept tugging at Jiang Hanwei's arm while saying, "Uncle Jiang! Can you give me some face?"

"Absolutely not!" Jiang Hanwei said angrily.

Xiaodong was nearly in tears. "But it's my birthday today!"

Jiang Hanwei charged straight into the banquet hall!

Several of the martial arts choreographers on his team rolled up their sleeves and also entered!

A C-list female director was trying to stop the fight as well. "Old Jiang, let it slide! Just forget it!"

"Let Xiaodong finish celebrating her birthday first!" A celebrity who had a good relationship with Jiang Hanwei spoke up, "This definitely isn't over, but don't act rashly today! There are reporters all around outside!"

A moment later, Zhang Ye and Jiang Hanwei were separated by just a few dozen meters!

Xiaodong was anxiously running back and forth, shouting, "Zhang Ye, leave!"

"Please leave!"

"Aiyo!"

"Why are you still standing there?"

Many celebrities were trying to stop the fight from breaking out as well!

It was complete chaos!

But before Jiang Hanwei and his people could say anything, Zhang Ye was already shamelessly yelling at them!

Zhang Ye pointed at Jiang Hanwei and his entourage. "Do you people fucking know how to drive?!"

What?

What did you say?

When Jiang Hanwei and company heard that, they were both angry and confused!

The other celebrities in the banquet hall nearly faceplanted!

A guy who had forcefully passed them! A guy who had pushed their car off a slope! How could he actually point at them now and ask them if they "fucking knew how to drive"?

Outrageous!

He dares to question if we know how to drive? Then how the fuck did you drive?!

A lot of people felt like vomiting blood right now. A person who dared to shout those words in such a situation was definitely not just fucking thick-skinned! If it were anyone else, even if they grew another layer of skin on their face, they wouldn't daringly shout those words! But Zhang Ye did, and he even did it with such a natural and dramatic sense of righteousness!

Jiang Hanwei erupted, "Zhang! You're playing dirty, eh?"

Zhang Ye stared at him coldly. "Who is playing dirty with who now? You passed me? And even scraped my car? If not for my quickass reflexes, my car would have gone off the side of the slope! With those driving skills, how can you still be driving? Even a woman driver drives better than you! Jiang, you should have let it go when I ignored you. I was thinking that since it was Xiaodong's birthday today, then no matter what, I would still have to give her some face and not bother with you. But why does it seem like you're addicted to condescending to me?"

Saying that, Zhang Ye walked toward them!

Fan Wenli was startled and tried to pull him back. "Don't! Don't go over there!"

Chen Guang also quickly grabbed him!

Zhang Ye said, "I've been watching your antics for the past two days! What'd you say? You wanted to embarrass me? And beat up my agent? And even claimed that you'd beat them up whenever you saw them? Who the fuck do you think you are! Don't talk about my agent. If you so much as lay a finger on me today, see if you can walk out of here standing!"

Chen Guang kept pulling him back. "Alright, enough with the big talk!"

When Xiaodong saw Zhang Ye walking over, she got scared out of her wits and quickly stood between Jiang Hanwei and him. "Zhang Ye, knock it off!"

"I'm talking big?" Zhang Ye pointed at Jiang Hanwei and said, "Ask him if he's willing fight me then!"

Jiang Hanwei laughed smugly. "I'm not?"

Entertained, Zhang Ye said, "Huh. Then bring it on!"

Fan Wenli said, "Alright, alright, knock it off. Stop talking, both of you!"

Everyone thought that Zhang Ye was just bragging because they knew how powerful the wushu champion, Jiang Hanwei, was. In a past interview, Jiang Hanwei performed an astonishing action. He used his hand to actually leave a palm impression on a rock. That was the first time that many people in the country witnessed the

legendary concealed power on television, and was also the closest experience to martial arts culture that they had seen. That interview had caused a sensation for a long time, and from then on, everyone knew that Jiang Hanwei was a martial arts expert who was probably ranked in the national top ten!

But Zhang Ye?

Everyone knew that he loved fighting. He had fought a Korean celebrity, some criminals, and even took the role of villain in a martial arts movie! But no one believed that Zhang Ye could beat Jiang Hanwei!

Jiang Hanwei sneered and declared, "Zhang Ye, don't be arrogant! If you want to survive in the industry, you have to follow the rules!"

"What a coincidence." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I've always been a reasonable person. If you come with good intentions, I will treat you likewise. We'll fight based on our abilities! But since you resorted to underhanded methods with me and even spread the word to warn that whoever dared be my agent would get beaten up every time you see them? Then we're finished with talking! I don't believe you would actually do so!"

Jiang Hanwei asked, "You don't believe that?"

"I really doubt it!" Zhang Ye said.

Jiang Hanwei laughed heartily. "Alright! In a few days, you'll definitely believe it!"

These words were a declaration of his intent!

Zhang Ye's newly recruited agent was definitely going to get beaten up in a few days' time!

Everyone was surprised!

Flustered, Xiaodong said, "Uncle Jiang!"

"It's none of your business, Xiaodong," Jiang Hanwei said. "Don't get yourself involved!"

Xiaodong exclaimed, "How can I not care!"

But Jiang Hanwei ignored her. Since it had come to this, the feud had to reach a conclusion. He turned his head to an industry peer and said, "Call and search again! Find out who his manager is!" Then he looked at Zhang Ye but also told everyone else at the same time, "I'm a man who always keeps his word!"

Zhang Ye wondered, "Is that so?"

Jiang Hanwei looked at him and challenged, "Try me!"

"Alright then, I'll really give it a try today. I'll see if you'll really do as you say!" Zhang Ye shrugged, then said, "You want to beat my agent up? In a few days? You don't have to wait a few days, and you can also stop your bullshitting already! I will get my agent to come here today!"

Jiang Hanwei was surprised, but guffawed, "Sure!"

The other celebrities present at the venue were all dumbfounded!

"What?"

"Get his agent to come here?"

"This..."

"Zhang Ye's gone crazy!"

"There's not even time to hide! Why make your agent come here!"

"Jiang Hanwei is a martial arts master!"

"Holy shit! Holy shit! Holy shit!"

"This is getting out of hand! Someone might die!"

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli hurriedly went to stop him!

Li Xiaoxian and Amy were also trying to drag Zhang Ye back!

But Zhang Ye had already taken out his cell phone to make a call.

Amy shouted, "Teacher Zhang! Don't get others into trouble!"

Li Xiaoxian said in panic, "How can you let your agent come here and get beaten up? What are you trying to achieve?!"

Everyone was shocked by Zhang Ye's decision and could not understand what he was thinking!

However, Jiang Hanwei said, "Let him make the call!"

The call went through!

Zhang Ye greeted, "Hello."

Rao Aimin replied, "What is it?"

"Come here, now!"

"Where?"

"Yanqi Hotel."

Rao Aimin said, "I'm already here!"

Chapter 956: Zhang Ye's wondrous agent!

At the banquet hall.

Everyone had run out of options!

"How did it end up like this?"

"He's really going to call his agent here?"

"Heavens! Quick, call the police!"

"Yeah, or else it'll really get out of hand!"

Jiang Hanwei was still sneering where he was standing.

His colleagues, the three martial arts choreographers, were also quite angry at Zhang Ye. The collision earlier had truly scared them out of their wits. They nearly got injured as well!

One of them said, "Brother Jiang, why are you still entertaining him!"

"Teach him a lesson!" another of them said.

The third person said, "Does he really think that we can be pushed around so easily?"

However, Jiang Hanwei only gave them a look. He did not say anything.

Actually, a lot of the people here did not quite understand why Jiang Hanwei did not make a move as he'd sought the dispute. Others believed there was definitely a grudge between Jiang Hanwei and Zhang Ye. Further, Zhang Ye had just wrecked Jiang Hanwei's car. Based on Jiang Hanwei's past temperament, he would already have tried to fight Zhang Ye. That was why many of them were afraid that a fight would happen and tried to stop it. But as it turned out, Jiang Hanwei did not actually make a move. In fact, he did not seem like he intended to fight with Zhang Ye at all. This perplexed many people. Some of them thought that Jiang Hanwei had considered Zhang Ye's status as an A-list celebrity and was afraid the consequences would be too much to contain, so deliberately held back.

But in truth, only Jiang Hanwei alone knew that he could not possibly fight against Zhang Ye in such circumstances. Because even he did not know who would win or lose if they did and he had no way of judging the outcome. The others might not know about Zhang Ye's skills, but how could he not know? As such, Jiang Hanwei's purpose was always very clear. If he wanted to embarrass Zhang Ye or deal with him, he wouldn't need to duel with him at all. It would be enough to just deal with his agent!

Your martial arts are impressive?

You are the strongest person below grandmaster level?

Alright then! I will just use your agent as an example!

That will be enough of a warning to others! It will be the same as slapping your face when it happens!

Moreover, Jiang Hanwei hated Zhang Ye's agent already. Even though that person knew that he had already spread word in the industry, they were still willing to become Zhang Ye's agent? Was it a relative of his? Or was it his friend? It would be revealed very soon! I will make sure to "fix" you properly today! I will let everyone see just how authoritative I, Jiang Hanwei, am in the entertainment industry. If I say that I will beat your agent up whenever I see them, then I will very much do so!

Zhang Ye hung up.

Within half a minute, a female hotel employee ran in from outside. Surprise written all over her face, she looked around, not knowing who to go to!

Xiaodong asked, "What's the matter?"

That female employee mumbled, "Someone without an invitation is looking for Zhang Ye."

Zhang Ye looked over. "Who is it?"

The female employee hesitated for a moment and then said, "Y-Your agent!"

Everyone looked horrified!

What?

His agent has arrived?

And so quickly too?

Xiaodong immediately said, "Don't let them in!"

Zhang Ye spoke at the same time as Xiaodong, "Let my agent in!"

Jiang Hanwei was thinking just how perfect the timing was. He looked at Xiaodong and said, "Xiaodong, I've already said. This is a personal grudge between Zhang Ye and me, so don't get yourself involved." Then he told the others, "I'm sorry that I had to let everyone witness this today. There's a small conflict that we have to settle first. After that, we will continue celebrating Xiaodong's birthday! I'll subject myself to three shots of alcohol later in apology to everyone. Sorry to have frightened my old and new friends who are here today!"

"Listen to what you're saying, Teacher Jiang."

"It's fine!"

"Settle what you need to."

"Teacher Zhang, you have gone too far today!"

"That's right, I don't blame Brother Jiang for being angry. How could you crash your car into Brother Jiang's car? What if something bad had happened? What if someone had gotten injured because of that?"

Some of them started criticizing Zhang Ye in front of the others.

Jiang Hanwei's standing in the industry was evident. A lot of the people here today were on his side, unlike Zhang Ye, who did not have many friends in the entertainment industry!

Jiang Hanwei smiled as he gave a fist and palm salute. "Thank you, everyone, for your understanding!"

The female hotel employee said nervously, "So should I let that big sis in?"

These words stunned quite a few people!

What?

Big sis?

Zhang Ye's agent was a woman?

Jiang Hanwei said coldly, "Let her in!"

Before they could see her, her voice came from afar.

"No need to let me! I'm already coming in!" That woman's voice was loud and clear!

The expressions on the faces of the Spring Garden's members immediately changed. They quickly rushed outside to stop her. Even though they knew that today's conflict wouldn't end amicably, they still couldn't let Zhang Ye's agent come inside to get beaten up, especially since she was a woman. Zhang Ye could allow it, but how could they allow it!

The other female celebrities who were close with Xiaodong also anxiously went outside to help!

Outside.

The hotel's security guards were furious!

"What's wrong with you!"

"We've said you can't enter!"

"Yeah! And why did you push us!"

The security guards were hopping mad and chasing her.

Only then did Xiaodong and the others realize that the big sis had already barged her way in all by herself! What was going on? Didn't she know that Jiang Hanwei was here today? Didn't she know that Jiang Hanwei had issued a threat that he would beat her up? Why did she still barge in? Was she dying to get in there? W-Why would anyone be that stubborn!

Eh?

She's this beautiful?

The moment they saw that woman, Xiaodong, Amy, and the rest were stunned!

This face!

This figure!

This demeanor!

Even in the entertainment industry where there were many gorgeous women, a woman with such looks was still quite rare. Surely this was not Zhang Ye's relative, right? Zhang Ye only had average looks, so how could he have such a beautiful relative! Then who the hell was she? Where did Zhang Ye find such a beautiful

woman to be his agent?

Xiaodong couldn't ponder these questions, so spoke at once, "Are you Zhang Ye's agent? Don't go in, don't go in. They're about to fight in there!"

Unexpectedly, this woman narrowed her eyes. "They've started fighting? Is it intense?"

Xiaodong was fretful. "Hurry up and turn back!"

The woman looked at her. "Who are you?"

Xiaodong was stunned. "You don't recognize me?"

The woman shook her head. "Should I know who you are?"

A different female celebrity was a little angered. "We're telling you to go back for your own good!"

The woman turned to look at her. "And who are you?"

That female celebrity was also quite famous in the entertainment industry. When she heard that, she was slightly shocked!

What agent is this! You don't even know who the famous celebrities in the industry are? From under which rock did you just

emerge! You can even become an A-list celebrity's agent like that?

Amy shouted, "There's someone inside who wants to beat you up! Do you understand it if I put it that way?"

Li Xiaoxian was very worried for her. "Hurry up and leave! When Uncle Jiang comes out, you won't be able to leave anymore! Don't listen to what Zhang Ye says. Don't go in. Zhang Ye will only get you into trouble!"

Surprisingly, when she heard this, she looked delighted. "Then all the more I have to go in and take a look. There aren't many people left in this country who dare to speak to me like that!"

She's a lunatic!

This woman isn't normal either!

Several of the celebrities who tried to stop the fight were rather confused by this. Indeed, one would always seek out someone similar to themselves. Why was this woman behaving just like Zhang Ye!

Are there any normal people left around here?

Chapter 957: Jiang Hanwei frightened into turning tail!

Many guests heard the voices outside!

Each person in the banquet hall was more shocked than the other!

"She's really coming in?"

"What is she doing!"

"Does she think this is a good place for her to be right now?"

"Is she pretending not to know or does she actually not know what's going on?"

"Why does that woman sound like she speaks in the same manner as Zhang Ye? The two of them seem to be made from the same mold!"

"She even wants to see how many in this country would dare to speak to her like that? Isn't she making too big a statement? As a small-time agent, you still want to demand that others speak to you in a certain way?"

"She sure talks a big game!"

Everyone whispered among themselves.

Jiang Hanwei and company were incensed to hear this!

A martial arts choreographer took it upon himself. "Brother Jiang, it's not necessary for you to dirty your hands. Leave her to me. Even if I have to risk getting detained for a few days, I must teach her and Zhang Ye a lesson today!"

"This is so infuriating!"

"I'll show her what she gets for disrespecting us!"

Several of the martial arts choreographers were indignant!

In truth, Jiang Hanwei did not plan to fight at this place as he still had considerations about the fallout from such a course of action. To him, this dispute could be resolved without even getting into a fight. Even though he could not intimidate Zhang Ye, how could he not intimidate a small-time agent Zhang Ye had hired off the street? He did not believe that, apart from a rash person like Zhang Ye who didn't care about anything, there would be someone in the entertainment industry who dared to challenge him!

The voices were approaching!

"Don't go in!"

"Aiyo, what are you doing!"

"Why can't you just heed the warning!"

Xiaodong and the rest were still trying their best stop that woman, but they were wholly unable to prevent her from barging in!

She was coming in!

There was no backing down now!

Jiang Hanwei shouted again, "Let her in!"

A choreographer said, "Old Jiang, forget it."

Jiang Hanwei waved his hands and said, "I'm not going to forget it! It doesn't matter who tries to intervene today. It won't work!"

A figure suddenly appeared. The woman stood at the banquet hall's entrance, along with Xiaodong, Amy, and the rest still pulling and tugging at her.

The moment they saw that woman, many people were astounded!

"This..."

"She's Zhang Ye's agent?"

"She's so beautiful!"

"Who is she? Who knows her?"

"I don't know, I've never seen her before!"

"Which company is she from?"

"I don't know!"

"Old Sun, you're familiar with this field!"

"I-I've never seen her before either. I don't recognize her at all!"

"What? She's not someone from the talent agency business?"

Everyone was rather surprised and astonished. They started gossiping!

But no one noticed that Jiang Hanwei froze—well and truly froze—the moment he saw this woman. Sweat instantly dripped down from his forehead!

How could it be her?

Why was it her!

Zhang Ye waved at her. "You're here?"

"I'm here." Rao Aimin looked around and asked, "Where is he?"

Zhang Ye smiled as he pointed in a certain direction. "He's right over there."

Rao Aimin looked over. "I heard that someone spread word that he would beat me up whenever he sees me? Is that right? Which idiot said that? Come forward and let me have a look. Come on!"

Idiot?

The moment she opened her mouth, she said the word "idiot"?

Chen Guang was floored!

Fan Wenli was at a loss for words!

Huo Dongfang stared, eyes wide!

Everyone was extremely shocked and wondered if she was really unafraid of getting beaten up.

Jiang Hanwei's three martial arts choreographers flew into a rage at her speech!

"What did you say?!"

"How can you speak like that!"

"You're too arrogant! You have a death wish!"

The three of them denounced her angrily!

Rao Aimin's eyes narrowed. "Oh, so you're the ones?"

Everyone thought that no matter how good a temper Jiang Hanwei had, or even if he would never hit a woman, after hearing those words, he definitely couldn't take them lying down. Her words were simply too provocative and full of arrogance!

However, something unexpected happened!

Jiang Hanwei didn't move a muscle!

His current thoughts could only be described by the word "motherfucker"!

Jiang Hanwei simply could not believe his eyes. He immediately recognized this woman when he saw her walk in. Back during the battle between the three grandmasters in the Zhou Family's headquarters, Jiang Hanwei happened to be present as well because he had work to take care of. He was one of a small number of people who had witnessed that battle, and had even come face to face with her before. He wasn't sure about whether Rao Aimin still remembered him, but he knew that he would definitely not be able to forget this terrifying face and that Swimming Body Eight Trigrams Palm technique in his lifetime! The events from back then were still vividly playing in his mind!

She was Zhang Ye's agent?

Zhang Ye!

You motherfucker!

You've fucking tricked me!

You're making me dig my own fucking grave!

A martial arts director was pointing at Rao Aimin and still swearing, "Don't fucking think that I—"

Suddenly, Jiang Hanwei forcefully pressed down the outstretched arm of that martial arts choreographer!

That person was taken aback. "Brother Jiang!"

Jiang Hanwei inhaled and said, "We're leaving!"

The three martial arts choreographers did not understand. "Ah? What?"

Jiang Hanwei clenched his teeth and turned around. "Let's go!"

Go?

Jiang Hanwei was leaving?

Everyone was stupefied!

What was happening?

What had just happened?

Why did he suddenly want to leave when he was being so aggressive just a moment ago?

Nobody could figure out how to react and had no understanding of all that was going on before their eyes!

Xiaodong was dumbfounded!

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli were shocked!

However, they were about to be in for another shock!

Rao Aimin looked at them and said plainly, "You've been shooting off your mouth at me for as long as I can remember as well as spreading word that you would be dealing with me. But now you're just gonna leave like that? That doesn't make any sense, does it? Didn't you say that you would beat me up?"

Beat you up?

I fucking haven't lived long enough yet!

Jiang Hanwei immediately stopped in his tracks!

"Brother Jiang!"

"What's going on?"

"What's happened to you?"

The three martial arts choreographers could not understand what was occurring!

But Jiang Hanwei did not explain anything to them. The back of

his shirt was drenched in sweat. As Rao Aimin did not allow him to leave, he did not dare move a muscle. He turned around to face Rao Aimin and gave a fist and palm salute, apologizing, "I'm sorry, Master Rao!"

Jiang Hanwei actually apologized to her!

Everyone was stunned by what they were seeing!

Rao Aimin glared at him and said, "In the future, don't go around saying things arrogantly. Don't keep wanting to beat people up without any reason. Did you think that you could just beat up anyone you like? I'm Zhang Ye's agent now. If you really wish to deal with me, feel free to come look for me at any time, any place, and any moment. I'll always be up for it no matter how many people you bring!"

Aggrieved, Jiang Hanwei gave her a fist and palm salute. "I would never!"

Rao Aimin asked, "Is there anything else?"

Jiang Hanwei wiped his sweat away. "No, nothing else."

Rao Aimin nodded and said, "If there's nothing else, scram!"

Scram?

Did you just say "scram" to Jiang Hanwei?

Everyone had been dumbfounded by what they were seeing and hearing for a while now!

Finally, without another word, Jiang Hanwei led his group of martial arts choreographers and turned around and walked away!

Xiaodong shouted, "Uncle Jiang!"

Jiang Hanwei didn't so much as turn his head!

"Just what happened?"

"This...Who can tell me what's going on here?"

"Who is that woman?"

"There's something off about Zhang Ye's agent!"

"Jiang Hanwei is a martial arts master! And an A-list celebrity too! So why is he so afraid of her? What sort of background does she come from?"

"Holy shit!"

"Teacher Jiang is leaving just like that?"

Everyone wore expressions of shock!

He would do as he said?

He would beat her up whenever he saw her?

Thinking back on those words that Jiang Hanwei had said, they were all coming back to slap his face now! Nobody could figure out why Jiang Hanwei had suddenly become so submissive after seeing that woman when he was still looking so confident a moment ago. Now he was so scared that he couldn't even utter a sound anymore?

Chapter 958: Her name is Rao Aimin!

Jiang Hanwei left!

Or rather, he fled!

Meanwhile, the people who stayed behind in the banquet hall were staring at each other in bewilderment. None of them could understand what they just seen, nor did they understand what was going on!

Chen Guang gasped several times. "Zhang Ye!"

"Hey." Zhang Ye looked at him.

"Who is this?" Chen Guang asked.

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "A friend of mine."

Stunned, Fan Wenli said, "Why did Old Jiang leave?"

Zhang Ye simply said, "He probably realized he was in the wrong and suddenly found a conscience."

Found a conscience?

Found a conscience, your sister!

Everyone was floored by his explanation. How do you keep coming up with such nonsense!

Xiaodong and the others also came up to him in surprise. "Zhang Ye, this..."

With the matter settled, the look on Zhang Ye's face also changed. He looked at Xiaodong with apology written all over his face. "I'm sorry, Sister Dong. I must apologize for today's disturbance. I didn't want to cause this much trouble. It's all my fault, so be angry with me if you must. I promise I won't say a word. I know that I've spoiled your birthday celebration."

Just like he said, Zhang Ye had always been a very reasonable person. Of the conflict between Jiang Hanwei and him, Zhang Ye had handled it based on his principles and wasn't afraid to do it that way in any other circumstances. How can you go around threatening that you'll beat up my agent? Go fuck yourself! But, Zhang Ye definitely felt bad about doing that here at Xiaodong's party. After all, she had invited him out of goodwill and whether Jiang Hanwei started the provocation first or not, Zhang Ye still had to apologize to her.

Xiaodong agonized, "I wouldn't have invited the two of you if I had known this was going to happen ahead of time. It's all my fault!"

Li Xiaoxian blinked several times. "Teacher Zhang, are you not going to introduce us to this big sis?"

"Oh, right." Zhang Ye smiled and gestured to Old Rao. "Let me introduce her to everyone. This is my agent from now on, Ms. Rao Aimin. Big Sis Rao is a good friend of mine. She's actually never been a part of our circle. I hope everyone will treat her well."

Rao Aimin?

Everyone looked at her with intense curiosity.

Amy changed the subject. "Let's start the party then!"

Xiaodong quickly added, "Sorry to have kept everyone waiting. Today...hai, sorry about today, everyone. Xiaoxian, Amy, and I will put on a performance for everyone, how's that?"

"Great!"

"Hahaha!"

"I'm looking forward to it!"

"Happy birthday, Sister Dong!"

"Happy birthday! Stay forever young!"

With the subject steered into a different direction, the music

started playing and everyone clapped along to it. Jiang Hanwei and Zhang Ye's dispute could only be placed in the back of their minds for now as it was not the main event today!

Spring Garden sparkled onto the stage!

Xiaodong sang, "See the sunlight, it's blinding."

Li Xiaoxian smiled and walked to the center. "My heart beats, dan-ger-ous-ly."

Amy started dancing to the song, singing as she did so. This was the style of their group. They were mainly geared toward the younger crowd, singing about the spirit of youth, love, and other similar topics.

At this moment, Rao Aimin said, "Alright, I'll be leaving now."

"Right now?" Zhang Ye said, slightly taken aback.

"There's nothing left for me to do, right?" Rao Aimin waved. She was leaving like she'd said she would. She didn't mince her words. "I still have to pick up the kid in the afternoon."

"OK," Zhang Ye said.

Several new celebrities had suddenly gone up to Rao Aimin.

"Sister Rao, do you mind leaving your number?"

"Let's exchange contact info, shall we?"

"Big Sis Rao, do you have a business card? If Teacher Zhang produces another show in the future, I wonder if I could be considered for a guest role on it? You don't even have to pay me!"

Rao Aimin looked at them and acknowledged, "Sure."

Seeing that, the people in the room hesitated for a split second before coming over to ask for her contact information as well.

Back when Zhang Ye did not have an agent, a lot of people could not, and had no way to, get in touch with him. Because Zhang Ye's reputation had grown so much, even if a newcomer or some small-time celebrities were able to contact him, it wasn't proper for them to contact him directly. Now that he had an agent representing him, everything had changed. A lot of matters and work could be liaised with Zhang Ye's agent from now on. That made it much more convenient for everyone.

There were even a few rather well-known celebrities who got their assistants or agents to go over to get Rao Aimin's contact information. Some of them wanted it for work purposes, while some were asking out of curiosity. That was because this agent of Zhang Ye's was clearly not an ordinary person, and the reason for that? It was obvious! Just by showing up, she could scare away as big a brother of the entertainment industry as Jiang Hanwei, so how could she be an ordinary person? Therefore, when a lot of

these people were asking Old Rao for her contact information, they asked her very politely and formally. They would never act impudently just because she was a new agent in the entertainment industry!

Rao Aimin had gotten into the zone as an agent.

Zhang Ye ignored what was going on with Old Rao as he had his mind on Xiaodong's birthday present at the moment. He had already prepared a present for her. It was a bracelet which wasn't cheap nor too expensive. Zhang Ye had gone to a mall to buy it for her. But after the dustup just now, he knew that this gift wouldn't be enough to make up for things. Zhang Ye felt rather embarrassed.

So what should he give her?

Gift her a song?

Alright, that would work!

Spring Garden began as singers after all. This was their main profession. If he gifted them a song, it would surely be the most unique and most suitable gift. It would also be able to express Zhang Ye's apology to them.

What song should he gift them?

A song meant for a group?

For a trio?

Eh, that's it! Wouldn't that song be great for them?

Besides, it was impossible that he would ever sing that song, so there was no point in saving it!

Since he had decided, Zhang Ye immediately called a hotel employee over. "Do you have a pen and paper?"

"Yes, we do. Please wait a moment." The employee immediately went to fetch the requested items.

Onstage, the members of Spring Garden were still performing the song that shot them to fame.

In the audience, quite a few people had noticed Zhang Ye's actions. They did not know what he was trying to do by asking for pen and paper. What stunt was this fellow trying to pull this time?

Rao Aimin had left already.

When Zhang Ye got pen and paper, he immediately lowered his head and started writing.

Lyrics...

Musical notation...

Finally, the performance onstage ended!

Amid the applause, Xiaodong and her sisters went off stage with smiles on their faces. "Thank you, everyone. All of you present today are my good friends, seniors, and my teachers. I am so happy that so many of you could be here today for me to spend my birthday with. I'm really thankful for that. When any of your birthdays come along, I will also be there as your guest!"

A fellow celebrity who was her close friend walked up slowly and handed something to her. "Happy birthday, Xiaodong."

"Wow, thanks!" Xiaodong smiled.

Then someone else came forward. "Here's your birthday present."

"Thank you, Brother Kai." Xiaodong gave him a smile.

One by one, the birthday presents were presented to her. Soon, she had received almost all of them.

At this moment, Zhang Ye finished writing everything. After giving it a once-over, he smiled to himself. He then got up and walked over. "Sister Dong, I'm sorry for today. This is my present

to you. Please keep it safe."

Xiaodong was stunned.

Li Xiaoxian and Amy were also stunned.

Everyone gazed at each other in dismay. Your present? So you requested pen and paper just now because you needed to prepare your birthday present? Damn, how could you be so petty! Just writing some things down and giving it as a gift? You had just created so much trouble by crashing into a car and scolding others, and now you're coming up with such a thing?

But Chen Guang did not seem to think so. He understood Zhang Ye quite well and said with a laugh, "Everyone, don't belittle Zhang Ye's gift. Anything that is written by him has a lot of worth."

Has worth?

True, Zhang Ye was a calligrapher after all!

Xiaodong gave a wry smile. "Zhang Ye, you're apologizing for the third time. It's fine."

Zhang Ye handed the piece of paper to her. "Hur hur, take a look and see if you like it. If you don't, I'll change it for you."

"I'll definitely like it," Xiaodong remarked. She then lowered her

head to have a look.

Li Xiaoxian and Amy went over to have a look as well.

Then, shock appeared on the three faces!

This is?

This is a song?

It's a song that Zhang Ye wrote and composed by himself?

Amy became excited all of a sudden. "Sister Dong!"

Li Xiaoxian also gulped at what she was seeing. They of course knew what a composition of Zhang Ye meant. "Woman Flower"? "Wishing We Last Forever"? "I Believe"? "A Letter to Home"? Which of those songs did not get famous and renowned throughout the country! Zhang Ye's songs had even been televised on Central TV's Spring Festival Gala before! Even a big shot celebrity like the Heavenly Queen, Zhang Yuanqi, who had a very good relationship with him, had to promise that she would be a guest on his show before he agreed to write her a song!

They read the lyrics.

Then sight-read the notation.

Xiaodong and her sisters were very musically inclined, so they started humming it in their heads.

Praising your smile,

Your knitted brows break my heart.

I cannot notice me,

I only feel what you feel.

Wherever you go,

Bring my soul along with you.

It's captured in your spell,

What use is leaving it?

You're a zap, you're my light,

You're my only fairy tale.

I love just you.

You are my super star.

You decide, I abide.

There is nothing better here.

Loving just you.

You are my super star.

This...

Xiaodong was utterly surprised!

Amy was very excited!

This song was simply perfect for their group!

Has worth?

They knew clearly that this was not something money could measure! Zhang Ye would never write a song for others for money!

"Zhang Ye!" But the more Xiaodong knew, the more she felt she couldn't accept this gift. She quickly placed the paper back into Zhang Ye's hand and insisted, "This isn't right, this really isn't right!"

Everyone was puzzled when they saw that.

What?

Why was she declining a scrap of paper?

Zhang Ye did not accept it. "Nothing's wrong, as long as you like it."

Li Xiaoxian immediately said, "We like it very much!"

Zhang Ye said, "Then that's enough. Just take it."

A close celebrity girlfriend of Xiaodong's could not bear the suspense. "Xiaodong, what good stuff did you receive?"

Xiaodong gave a wry smile and said, "Zhang Ye wrote us a song for my birthday present!"

Ah?

He wrote a song?

Did he write it on the spot?

Everyone looked shocked. They only just now understood why Zhang Ye had requested pen and paper. So it was because he

wanted to write and compose a song for them! Goddammit, how can you be so quick! They hadn't even finished performing their song and you were already done writing the song? And judging from the expressions of Xiaodong and her sisters, this song seemed like it was really good too?

Of course it was a good song! This was the song in his previous world that shot S.H.E to fame, "[Super Star](#)." It was a song that was heard almost everywhere by many people! A song like that was something Zhang Ye would never bother singing himself, even in his next life. So it was more than suitable to use it here as a gift for them.

A female singer went over quickly. "Show it to us!"

Xiaodong hurriedly put it away. "Absolutely not. This is confidential, highly confidential!"

"But why?" asked the female singer, floored.

Xiaodong pondered for a moment. "For our next album, I'm thinking of using this song as our title track!" She turned around to look at Zhang Ye and said, "I've always been hoping to get a song from you, but was too embarrassed to ask. But today...thank you so much!"

Chen Guang was full of envy. He came over immediately and said, "Zhang Ye, my birthday is coming soon too!"

Zhang Ye: "..."

Then Fan Wenli spoke up too. "Although my birthday has passed, I can still celebrate it again."

Zhang Ye: "..."

Everyone laughed.

In an instant, Jiang Hanwei and Zhang Ye's conflict from earlier seemed to have been played down some.

...

Outside.

A BMW 7 Series with a badly damaged rear was traveling on the road.

Jiang Hanwei sat in the car with a sunken expression. He did not say a single word.

Beside him, his martial arts choreographers were stifling their anger with all they could. Ever since they'd joined the Jiang Hanwei Stunt Team, when had they never gotten their way in the entertainment industry? They had never experienced something that left them so aggrieved before!

"Brother Jiang!"

"Say something!"

"Just why? Why did we have to leave?"

"Yeah, we should have fought her!"

"She's just a woman. What storm can she brew? Now that we left, it's as good as slapping our own faces! How many of our peers will be laughing at us now!"

They simply could not understand it!

Jiang Hanwei was still not saying a word!

"Brother Jiang!"

"Brother Jiang!"

Eventually, Jiang Hanwei got annoyed by their questions. He suddenly lost his temper. "What can we do if we don't leave? Ah? You guys fucking think it's that simple, but do you know who that woman is?"

The three martial arts choreographers asked, "Who is she?"

Jiang Hanwei said in a grave voice, "Her name is Rao Aimin!"

"Rao Aimin?"

"Is there such a person in the entertainment industry?"

"Which talent agency is she from?"

"Is she the relative of one of their bosses?"

"Eh, why does that name sound so familiar?"

After those words were uttered, the three of them suddenly realized. Their looks on faces changed to horror and their voices squeaked in terror!

"Rao Aimin?"

"The grandmaster from the Eight Trigrams School...Rao Aimin?!"

"Holy shit!"

"How's that possible!"

"Th-This is impossible!"

"Why would a Chinese martial arts grandmaster go and work as a celebrity's agent? Much less an A-list celebrity like Zhang Ye, even if it were a fucking international S-list superstar, that would not be possible!"

They were petrified!

On top of that, the cold sweat from the fear they were experiencing had soaked their clothes through and through. When they thought about how they had pointed at a martial arts grandmaster and scolded her earlier, they could feel their legs turning to rubber!

No wonder Jiang Hanwei turned and left!

What could he do besides leaving?

Actually fight her?

Even if she used just one arm, the four of them teaming up would still be unable to beat her!

Jiang Hanwei said, "Who the fuck knows the answer to your question? Like hell I would know why a formidable female grandmaster like her would go and become Zhang Ye's agent!" Right, if he knew that, he wouldn't have spread word even on threat of death. Beating Rao Aimin up every time he saw her? He wasn't trying to court death! He wouldn't even stand much of a

chance if he faced Zhang Ye. If he had to face a grandmaster? He wouldn't even try to make a move!

Jiang Hanwei knew that he had made himself look like an idiot this time!

He had been toyed with to his grandma's house by Zhang Ye!

"And there's something else that you guys don't know." Since it had come to this, Jiang Hanwei had nothing he couldn't say. "You aren't exactly members of our martial arts world, so you might not know yet. But Zhang Ye is no ordinary person either. Have you guys heard of the Taiji Fist that has been lost for over a hundred years? The Taiji Fist successor has reappeared in the martial arts community. He made an appearance together with Rao Aimin at the Tianshan Martial Arts Conference some days back. That person was Zhang Ye!"

What?

Zhang Ye is Taiji Fist's successor?

He was the one who allied with Rao Aimin and battled against two grandmasters?

Zhang Ye was the person who defeated all the large sects by himself?

When they heard what Jiang Hanwei had to say, the martial arts

choreographers were once again petrified!

One was the successor of Taiji Fist!

The other was a Chinese martial arts grandmaster!

Fuck! Did these two ally and sneak into the entertainment industry as well?

Then who in the circle could fucking do anything about the two of them!?

Chapter 959: The Second Successor Of Taiji Fist Appears?

The next day.

It was a cloudy day with heavy smog outside.

After putting on his face mask, Zhang Ye drove off to work. He would be departing from Central TV soon, though it was still some days away. He had taken a slightly longer leave this time and was gone for almost a month. As he was still considered an employee of the Central TV Documentary Channel, he was obliged to return to the office to have a look around and handle some work.

At the station.

Department 14's office space.

"How's everything going with your boyfriend?"

"We're doing alright."

"Bring him here. I'll give you some advice."

"Sure."

Right as Zhang Ye entered the office, he noticed a bunch of his

colleagues currently engaged in their own activities. After a long absence, he rather missed these colleagues who had battled alongside him at work. Some of them were eating breakfast, some were sneakily playing games, and some were gossiping in whispers. As no one had noticed his arrival yet, Zhang Ye could not help teasing them a little.

"The boss is here!" Zhang Ye shouted.

In an instant, the office was thrown into disarray!

Little Wang hastily closed her game!

Wu Yi stuffed the last mouthful of a bun into his mouth!

Several of his colleagues who were chattering away abruptly changed the topic of discussion!

"How's everything going with your work?"

"It's quite alright."

"Bring it to me. I'll give you some advice."

"Sure."

When Zhang Ye heard that, he didn't know whether to laugh or

cry. With the same conversation as before, all you did was fucking replace the word "boyfriend" with "work"? Couldn't you at least come up with something different? As they said, soldiers emulated their general. This saying seemed to be rather true after all. Having worked under Zhang Ye for so long now, this group of colleagues were becoming more and more shameless. Each one competed to be more thick-skinned than the last!

"Ah!"

"Director Zhang!"

"It's Director Zhang!"

Gasps of surprise sounded throughout the office!

At this moment, everyone realized that the person standing at the entrance was actually Zhang Ye. Only then did they know they had been tricked by him. The person who had come in was indeed a boss, since he was the boss of their documentary channel. But as everyone knew, Zhang Ye was different from the other bosses. He was never bothered by their chatting or playing games during office hours.

Little Wang was pleasantly surprised. "Director Zhang!"

Little Li gasped. "Director Zhang is back! Director Zhang is back!"

Ha Qiqi stood up. "Director Zhang."

"We've missed you so much!" Even the manly Zhang Zuo played along with everyone else.

Zhang Ye was amused by this. "Oh, come now. I saw you guys having fun and looking like you didn't want me coming back here. In the future, quit the game more cleanly. Your minimized window can still be seen."

A few of the staff who had been playing games smiled awkwardly.

Then a bunch of people surrounded Zhang Ye and asked him all sorts of questions.

"Director Zhang, how's the dispute going between you and Jiang Hanwei?"

"Yeah, we're all concerned about that!"

"Why is there suddenly no news?"

"Did you really crash into Jiang Hanwei's car?"

"It seems that yesterday, at the birthday party of Spring Garden's Teacher Xiaodong, Jiang Hanwei led his people out before the event even started? What happened there? What exactly was the outcome?"

"Didn't he say that he would beat up your agent?"

"So who on earth is your agent?"

"I think it's a woman, right?"

"Yeah, I saw the pictures the reporters published! But it was a bit blurry!"

"She kinda looked beautiful, right?"

Question followed question.

Zhang Ye replied with a smile, "I have an agent now named Rao Aimin. In the future, if there are any advertisers calling to look for me at the office, you can get them to contact her instead. I'll give everyone her number later. She'll be given full authority to handle all of my affairs from now on."

Little Wang said excitedly, "I've finally been set free! I won't need to answer your phone calls every day anymore!"

Zhang Ye said, "It's been hard on you for the past month."

Little Wang stood at attention. "I was just doing my part for the people!"

Ha Qiqi asked, "Then about the Jiang Hanwei matter..."

"That's done with." Zhang Ye said, "I won't talk about it in detail since it's pointless to do so."

But the more that Zhang Ye did not want to touch on it, the more curious everyone became!

"Please tell us!"

"That's right, Jiang Hanwei has really gone too far!"

"Wasn't he planning to deal with your agent?"

"Director Zhang, quickly tell us about it!"

Everyone continued pressing him for an answer. They understood Director Zhang's temperament and knew that he was someone whom they could easily talk with, so they were not afraid of him and just asked as they thought.

But Zhang Ye waved it off and did not reveal anything. Because to him, even though it was Jiang Hanwei who provoked him and tried to mess with him for no apparent reason, this was still not something to be proud of. Wrecking Jiang Hanwei's car? Scolding him at Xiaodong's birthday celebration? Scaring him away? There was no need to bring this up; neither did it paint Zhang Ye in a

good light. Zhang Ye would still combat this sort of internal conflict and scolding within the industry when necessary, but he'd never actually liked doing it. It was just that he had no other recourse since he was provoked first, so he had to react!

But even as Zhang Ye did not wish to talk about it, news of it appeared online!

Little Wang said, "Look, something's going on again!"

"What is it?"

"Jiang Hanwei has spoken up!"

"Is that so? Where? Where?"

Everyone went over to Little Wang and surrounded her.

A day after the incident, Jiang Hanwei had finally issued a response. He had accepted a phone interview with an entertainment news tabloid in Southern China!

The headline: "Jiang Hanwei clarifies his stand: He dislikes people like Zhang Ye!"

Jiang Hanwei said in his phone interview: "I have always disliked people like Zhang Ye and have my doubts about how he's become so popular today. What is wrong with the people nowadays? Next,

I would like to clarify a rumor spreading around, saying that I had threatened to beat up Zhang Ye's agent? I never said anything like that! Everyone, please stop spreading such baseless rumors! We have to stop it right there!"

Heated discussions on this topic started appearing on the Internet!

"Everyone has their own likes and dislikes!"

"Yeah, I like Zhang Ye, so what!"

"Me too. I feel happy whenever I get to see Zhang Ye!"

"Jiang Hanwei is clearing up the rumors?"

"That can't be, didn't someone confirm that such a thing really took place?"

"Why has it become a rumor now?"

"Jiang Hanwei has most definitely said those words before! Has he changed his tune?"

"There's definitely something to this that we don't know of!"

"It might really just turn out to be a rumor."

"Rumor, my ass! The two of them were even involved in a collision!"

"Yeah, Zhang Ye crashed into Jiang Hanwei's car due to being cut off, so why did Jiang Hanwei not mention anything about that? What's the reason for his silence?"

"Just what is going on with them? I'm starting to get confused by all this!"

"Don't tell me that the meaning of Jiang Hanwei's interview was essentially him admitting defeat?"

"With Old Jiang's standing in the entertainment industry, even he can't do anything about Zhang Ye?"

"Whatever it is, it's case closed. Let's all just leave. Disperse!"

The development of this affair had gone beyond everyone's expectations. The moment this conflict was made known, some people thought that Zhang Ye would definitely engage in a fierce battle with Jiang Hanwei or maybe even get into a physical fight with him. Needless to say, Zhang Ye's agent who had popped out of the blue would definitely be unable to escape as well, since Jiang Hanwei had always walked the walk. But in the end, nothing came out of it? Jiang Hanwei actually denied saying all those words?

Everyone started making wild guesses about what had really

happened!

There was also an increase of all kinds of rumors!

Some said a bigwig from the entertainment industry had stepped in to help mediate things.

Some said it was Xiaodong who settled the dispute for the two of them.

Some even said that after Jiang Hanwei saw that Zhang Ye's agent was a woman, he chose not to do anything as he would not hit a woman.

Would not hit a woman?

Only the tiny group of entertainment industry insiders present that day knew the truth behind all these rumors. They were the only ones who knew that this was not Jiang Hanwei admitting defeating, but that he had been frightened into turning tail due to Zhang Ye's wondrous female agent! And as for Jiang Hanwei's clarification this time, it made them more convinced that Jiang Hanwei was not actually afraid of Zhang Ye since he could still publicly express his dislike for people like him after all that had happened. It was likely that he would still have further conflict with Zhang Ye. Jiang Hanwei mainly wanted to use this interview to refute that he had ever said that he would beat up Zhang Ye's agent. Only those who knew the whole story could understand that this line was the essence of his interview. Jiang Hanwei would rather slap himself in the face by eating his words than not doing

so!

Who on earth was Zhang Ye's female agent?

This question caused a big stir in the entertainment industry!

...

Later that morning.

Director Yan Tianfei came over and made small talk with Zhang Ye for a while.

"Director Zhang, is everything resolved?" Yan Tianfei asked.

"Yes." Zhang Ye nodded. "I'm back at work again starting today."

Yan Tianfei reminded, "Be wary of Jiang Hanwei in the future. That man is not to be trifled with."

Zhang Ye acknowledged the advice with a smile and said, "Director Yan, I know that, but I happen to be someone who's not to be trifled with either."

Yan Tianfei chuckled. "It's not that you're not to be trifled with, but that to trifle with you would be a terrible mistake!"

Zhang Ye got engrossed into his work as he helped Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others rehearse the air pollution documentary that was going to be broadcast soon.

Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo brought up some of the difficulties they faced in their work.

Troubled, Ha Qiqi said, "We are unable to proceed with some of the statistics gathering and experimental data."

Zhang Ye replied, "If there's something you need, just let me know. I'll be leaving the station soon, and you two are the executive directors this time. As long as I can help out, I will do it if you ask me."

Zhang Zuo said, "About the research lab at Peking University, we would like to..."

Zhang Ye immediately agreed, "Alright, I'll help you get in contact with them. There won't be any problems. I'll call them about it and get them to give you whatever information you require."

Ha Qiqi added, "We can't handle the Meteorological Administration. There's some data they simply refuse to hand over to us!"

Zhang Ye nodded. "OK, I'll help you get it done!"

"And some of the interviews..." Zhang Zuo trailed off.

Zhang Ye said, "Sure, I'll look over them when the time comes."

Zhang Zuo hesitated, "Even if it's you who asks them, it might not work out since they don't accept any TV interviews."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Don't forget that I'm an associate professor at Peking University and Media College. Even though my social ties in the entertainment industry are poor, they will still give me some face."

Ha Qiqi laughed. "Great. I'll get Little Huang to get you the information."

Awhile later, Huang Dandan brought the information to him. "Cough, cough, cough, Director Zhang, cough, cough, here you are."

Zhang Ye looked up at her. "You still have a cold?"

Huang Dandan had a normal complexion. "It hasn't gotten better."

Zhang Ye stated, "Before I went on my break, you were already sick, right? Take good care of yourself."

Huang Dandan smiled and said, "Of course. Thank you for your

concern, Director Zhang."

They worked the entire morning.

...

Noon.

It was time for the lunch break.

Zhang Ye exhaled, stretched, and stood up as he prepared to go for lunch.

But the moment he stepped outside, he overheard his colleagues whispering among themselves.

"She's beautiful."

"Why did she come all the way here?"

"I don't know."

"I heard that she's been waiting the entire morning."

"Security called us a ton of times. Should we tell Director Zhang about it?"

"I suppose she's a fan?"

"But she doesn't look like one!"

Zhang Ye overheard a little of the conversation and asked, "What are you guys talking about? Who's looking for me? What fan?"

Little Wang was startled. "Uh, Director Zhang."

Huang Dandan scratched her head and said, "Security has been calling since this morning, saying that there was a woman specifically asking for you. She doesn't have an ID badge, an entry pass, or your contact number, so security tried to chase her away. But it seems that she still refused to leave and has been waiting downstairs until now, saying that she must definitely meet you today."

There were many cases of fans chasing after stars and quite a number of people would always come to Central TV to catch a glimpse Zhang Ye, so it was not something new to them. The reason that security informed Department 14 about this issue was probably because she was quite pretty?

Zhang Ye asked, "Did they say why she was looking for me?"

"Uh, they did not," Huang Dandan replied.

Zhang Ye nodded. "Let's go downstairs and grab lunch. I'm treating today."

"Wow."

"Director Zhang is treating us?"

"I'm joining too then!"

"Haha!"

Everyone cheered at that because Zhang Ye was very generous. Whenever he treated them, it was always a sumptuous meal.

They took the elevator down.

20th floor...

10th floor...

5th floor...

Before the elevator door even opened, everyone in the elevator could hear a woman shouting when they were nearing the second floor!

"Zhang Ye!"

"Come out!"

The elevator stopped on the first floor.

The elevator door opened and everyone looked out in astonishment.

There were also quite a number of colleagues on the first floor who were looking at that woman with curious eyes.

Ha Qiqi said in a daze, "That's the woman who's looking for Director Zhang?"

"Why is she shouting?" Zhang Zuo scowled.

There were around four security guards approaching her and trying to chase her out!

"What are you doing!"

"Are you here to cause trouble?"

"Hurry up and leave!"

"If you shout again, we'll call the police!"

Pushed to the breaking point, the security guards nearly took physical action against her!

When Zhang Ye saw this, he quickly stopped them. He always treated his fans with kindness, but this person did not seem to be a fan. "Let me deal with her!"

A security guard turned around in surprise. "Teacher Zhang, you've come down?"

An overweight security guard said, "This person is causing trouble! She's been here since morning!"

Zhang Ye smiled. "No worries, just let me deal with her."

It was a woman in her early twenties. She should be around the same age as Zhang Ye. She was not the type who looked extremely beautiful at first glance, but she would definitely not be ignored in a crowd. She had an elegant aura and was a good-looking person who obviously stood out. This woman was dressed in typical exercise attire. Her shoes looked rather old but were very clean. From this, she probably didn't come from some rich family. Her black hair was styled into a simple ponytail.

The woman also saw Zhang Ye. Her eyes immediately hardened!

Zhang Ye took a few steps forward. "May I know who you are?"

Ha Qiqi, Little Wang, and the others were afraid that Zhang Ye

had encountered some crazy fan, so they followed close behind him.

The woman gazed at him. "You've finally shown yourself."

Zhang Ye asked with curiosity, "Why have you sought me out?"

However, Zhang Ye was immediately shocked by the woman's answer. She said, "Zhang Ye, why are you going around misleading others using the name of Taiji?"

Taiji?

What Taiji?

The people around them did not understand what was going on!

But Zhang Ye understood and narrowed his eyes. Those who knew about Taiji Fist and knew that he knew Taiji Fist were pointedly not ordinary folk. Only those from the Chinese martial arts world knew! Zhang Ye did not expect that someone would come looking for him and question him. Was she an enemy? Was she from one of the large sects? She didn't look like one of them! When did I ever mislead anyone?

Zhang Ye turned around and told Ha Qiqi and the rest, "Go ahead and eat lunch on your own. Bring back the receipt and I'll reimburse it for you guys. I have some things to attend to for now."

Ha Qiqi said in surprise, "Director Zhang?"

"Go ahead. I'll be fine," Zhang Ye said.

His colleagues walked off but looked back every step of the way.

Zhang Ye pointed to a makeshift reception room in the corner of the lobby. "Can I have a word with you?"

"Sure." The woman followed him.

In the reception room.

There were only the two of them here.

Only then did Zhang Ye size this woman up carefully. "You're from our martial arts world?"

The woman said, "You can say that."

Zhang Ye wondered, "Why did you accuse me of misleading others?"

The woman stared at him. "It's not like you really know Taiji Fist, right?"

"Why do you think that I don't know Taiji Fist?" Zhang Ye asked another question.

The woman explained, "Because there's only one successor left in this generation of Taiji Fist, and you're obviously not that successor!"

Curious, Zhang Ye inquired, "Who are you?"

The woman regulated her breathing as she looked at him in the eye. Then, she said something shocking. "Taiji, Yang Shu!"

Chapter 960: Zhang Ye vs. Yang Shu!

Taiji?

Yang Shu?

Her reply startled Zhang Ye!

Other than him, there was someone else who practiced Taiji Fist in this world? From the reaction of the Chinese martial arts world, Zhang Ye and the rest of the martial arts community had always thought that Taiji Fist was lost since over a hundred years ago! It was impossible that a successor of Taiji would appear ever again. Therefore, when Zhang Ye used his Taiji Fist at the Martial Arts Conference, everyone looked like they had seen a ghost and were shocked beyond imagination as no one could believe that it had really happened!

Yet now, another successor had appeared?

Another person who practiced Taiji Fist?

And even a young woman at that?

And her surname was Yang?

This lineage made Zhang Ye's heart skip a beat. He knew that in his previous world, Taiji Fist had originated from the Chen

[lineage](#). However, the Yang and Chen lineages' Taiji were basically inseparable. As for the Zhang lineage's [Comrade Sanfeng](#), he was just a legendary figure used mainly for television and film purposes. Although he really existed, there was no physical evidence that linked Taiji Fist and him together. As luck would have it, perhaps by chance, the Taiji grandmaster of this world who had swept aside the martial arts community over a hundred years ago also had the surname Yang!

Zhang Ye said in surprise, "You know Taiji?"

"Of course." Yang Shu looked at him.

Zhang Ye immediately asked, "Who is your master?"

Yang Shu answered, "I'm not telling."

Zhang Ye looked at her in disbelief. "Are you lying or something?"

These days, many scammers were going around.

When Yang Shu heard this, her eyes turned even colder. "A charlatan like you dares to accuse me of lying?"

"Damn, when did I become a charlatan?" Zhang Ye was bewildered.

Yang Shu reprimanded, "You lied to everyone at the National Martial Arts Conference and made them believe that you practiced Taiji Fist, so doesn't that make you a charlatan? How can you possibly know Taiji!"

Zhang Ye felt helpless.

It's just that you didn't know, since the people of this world had very little understanding of Taiji Fist. If we were back in my previous world, you could grab any old person off the street, and they'd all fucking know how to demonstrate a few modified moves of Taiji Fist for health exercises. You would definitely be fucking shocked if you saw that!

Zhang Ye could only ask, "Then what's your purpose in finding me today?"

Yang Shu smoothed her ponytail and said clearly, "Zhang Ye, your actions have insulted the reputation of Taiji Fist. I now formally issue a challenge to you!"

Zhang Ye was taken aback. "A challenge?"

"Do you have the courage to accept?" Yang Shu asked.

Zhang Ye spread his hands. "Why must we settle this with a fight?"

Yang Shu said with righteous conviction, "Because I want to

expose your lies!"

Zhang Ye did not know what to say to this. Actually, he was very curious about the background of this woman sitting before him. Could it be that she really knew Taiji Fist?

Yang Shu added, "Ever since you shot that movie, I've wanted to find you. With just a few moves of Taiji that you recreated from hearsay, how dare you use it to shoot a movie? How dare you claim that it was Taiji Fist? What a joke! You have blackened Taiji Fist's reputation!"

After thinking about it for a while, Zhang Ye finally said, "Alright, there's no problem with exchanging a few blows, but not here. This is where I work, so it wouldn't be good if we fought here. Besides, we couldn't contain the noise to this room anyway. So how about this, I'll take you somewhere where there aren't as many people."

Yang Shu said coolly, "Lead the way."

"Let's go." Zhang Ye pulled the door open and stepped outside. "Get in my car."

As he didn't know if he could make it back in time in the afternoon, Zhang Ye called Yan Tianfei to inform him and applied for time off in advance. Only then did he drive his BMW off onto the road.

In the car.

Yang Shu inspected the interior. "Are you very rich?"

Zhang Ye sighed, "Enough to eat and live comfortably."

Yang Shu made a noise in acknowledgment, then closed her eyes, as though she were conserving her strength for later.

Zhang Ye glanced at her through the rearview mirror and couldn't help thinking that she was a kind of rash person and felt that she didn't often interact with people. As such, Zhang Ye was becoming more and more suspicious of her. It was a big "if" whether she even knew martial arts, let alone Taiji Fist.

Jiaomen East.

At Rao Aimin's apartment.

This was where Zhang Ye had been renting an apartment ever since he graduated from college. Counting the days, it had already been quite a while since he came back here. In the six months that Old Rao had gone away, he had always stayed at his parents' house.

They took the elevator and went upstairs.

Yang Shu asked, "Is this your place?"

Zhang Ye said, "Not really, it's just a rented apartment."

Yang Shu nodded. Then, she suddenly asked, "Do you have anything to eat here?"

"Ha?" Zhang Ye did not know how to react. "Something to eat?"

Yang Shu said, "I just got off the train this morning and haven't had anything to eat yet."

Zhang Ye listened carefully and realized that a rumbling noise was coming from Yang Shu's stomach. Actually, Zhang Ye was also hungry as he didn't have time to eat lunch. "Alright, let me see what I can find."

When the elevator reached their floor, Zhang Ye brought her straight to Old Rao's door.

Bang bang bang.

"Big Sis Rao!"

After a moment, the door opened.

"Big Sis Rao, do you have anything to eat?" Zhang Ye immediately asked.

When Rao Aimin saw that it was Zhang Ye standing at the door, she smacked her lips and said, "You rascal, did you follow the smell here?"

A delicious aroma drifted out from the house. She had clearly just finished making lunch.

Chenchen also came to the door. "Zhang Ye, you're here?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Yo, you're not at school today?"

Chenchen acknowledged, "There's no classes in the afternoon."

Then the two of them suddenly realized that there was a woman standing behind Zhang Ye.

Rao Aimin raised an eyebrow and asked, "[Your nectar](#)?"

As Yang Shu was not from Beijing, she didn't understand that term.

This was Beijing slang and meant something similar to: Your girlfriend?

Zhang Ye quickly said, "Oh, what are you saying! Can we have something to eat first? I will tell you in a little while. There's no way to make this long story short." Then he turned his head to Yang Shu and said, "Come on in."

Yang Shu just nodded and walked into the house, making herself at home.

Zhang Ye gave a casual introduction. "This is my agent."

Yang Shu looked at Rao Aimin and nodded slightly at her. "Hello." She looked around the two-story penthouse apartment curiously and then said to Zhang Ye, "Is your agent very rich?"

Zhang Ye: "..."

Why do you keep asking this question?

And why do you think that everyone you encounter is rich?

Chenchen wondered, "Zhang Ye, who is she?"

Rao Aimin pulled him to the side at this moment, leaving Yang Shu by herself to look around. "Who is she? Why did you bring her here? Do you seriously consider me a cook?"

Chenchen followed them.

Zhang Ye smiled wryly. "She says her name is Yang Shu and that she is the successor of Taiji Fist."

"The successor of Taiji?" Rao Aimin narrowed her eyes in great interest.

Zhang Ye shrugged. "She keeps insisting that I'm a fraud and wants to duel me. I think she mentioned that she only just arrived in Beijing this morning and hasn't had anything to eat yet, so I brought her here to eat something first."

Rao Aimin asked, "Is she really from your Taiji branch of martial arts?"

"I don't know, but it doesn't look like it," Zhang Ye replied.

"Interesting." Rao Aimin snapped her fingers. "Alright, let's go and eat. I'll whip up another dish or two, so don't forget to pay up before you leave. Don't come here thinking that you can freeload."

"Why must you be so stingy?"

Before long, the food was ready.

The four of them sat down at the table and started eating.

The moment they picked up their chopsticks, the atmosphere changed!

Zhang Ye, Rao Aimin, and Chenchen just ate as they usually would, but when they looked at Yang Shu, they were rather taken

aback.

Yang Shu ate very quickly, but it was not hurried. Her eating habits were very difficult to describe in words. Her chopsticks grabbed food several times, and in the blink of an eye, her bowl full of rice was emptied. It seemed like she ate more rice than the food itself.

She polished off a bowl of rice just like that.

Yang Shu put down her chopsticks on the empty bowl and did not move.

Zhang Ye said dumbfounded, "Do you want another bowl of rice?"

Yang Shu nodded. "Yes."

So Zhang Ye went to refill her bowl and brought it back to her. "Here."

"Thank you." Yang Shu picked up her chopsticks again and her bowl of rice was rapidly emptied again.

Zhang Ye was stunned. "Do you still want more?"

Yang Shu nodded. "...Sure."

She ate a total of four bowls of rice. Although the bowl was small, every serving was heaped to the brim. Yang Shu alone had eaten more rice than Zhang Ye, Rao Aimin, and Chenchen combined!

Damn!

Just how many days haven't you eaten for?

Zhang Ye said in a polite manner, "Why don't you eat some of the food?"

Yang Shu well and truly helped herself. "Sure." She attacked a dish with her chopsticks.

There wasn't much food left on the table by this point.

Chenchen tried to snatch the remaining food from her. "This piece of meat is mine!"

But Yang Shu had already gripped the piece of meat between her chopsticks.

Chenchen's chopsticks bashed into Yang Shu's chopsticks.

Yang Shu reflexively avoided it.

Chenchen flicked her wrist and fended that move upwards in the

opposite direction using her chopsticks.

Yang Shu was momentarily startled. "Eight Trigrams?"

Chenchen had been practicing the Eight Trigrams Palm with Rao Aimin since she was young. Although she wasn't old enough to actually practice the martial arts for real, the stance and moves were still evident. She had been trained and influenced by Rao Aimin over the years!

It was a surprise that Yang Shu could recognize it this quickly!

Zhang Ye and Rao Aimin gave each other a look.

She really was a martial artist?

Her observation skills were definitely there!

Zhang Ye's interest was piqued and he shot out his chopsticks to join in as well. "This is the last piece of pork belly, and I haven't had some in a long time, so why not leave it for me instead?"

With him joining in, Yang Shu could feel a gentle force coming through the chopsticks and nearly lost her grip on them!

Yang Shu's expression changed slightly. "I think we should leave it for the child instead!"

Yang Shu loosened her grip on the chopsticks, then immediately followed with a raising motion and tried to push Zhang Ye's chopsticks away!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "The child shouldn't eat too much as she might get indigestion, so let me have it instead."

Yang Shu discovered that she wasn't able to push him away!

Zhang Ye's chopsticks were seemingly stuck to hers, clinging to her movements!

"The child is growing!" Yang Shu gripped the piece of pork belly and applied some slight downward pressure while suddenly turning the chopsticks toward Zhang Ye's hand!

"I've been working the entire morning, so I'm quite hungry." Zhang Ye struck out in an arc in the opposite direction as he adjusted his chopsticks into a vertical position just in time to block the tip of Yang Shu's chopsticks!

The forces collided!

The pork belly tumbled through midair!

Yang Shu went after it with her chopsticks!

Zhang Ye pushed away her chopsticks!

Yang Shu blocked!

Zhang Ye channeled some neutralizing power against her block!

But Yang Shu also channeled a stream of neutralizing power through her chopsticks at the same moment!

The chopsticks crashed into each other!

Pah!

A shockwave passed through Zhang Ye's hand and it trembled, but he did not drop his chopsticks!

Meanwhile, Yang Shu's chopsticks instantaneously flew out of her hands and hit the wall behind her before falling onto the ground!

With a quick motion, Zhang Ye grabbed the falling piece of pork belly.

Yang Shu sat there stunned!

But at the next second, Rao Aimin's chopsticks suddenly joined in as well. "I've always wondered how a rascal like you could have practiced your martial arts to such a level. Since today's occasion feels rather suitable, let's spar."

Zhang Ye gave a wry smile. "Oh, I'm not gonna spar with you."

Rao Aimin said, "My injuries are not recovered yet, so you won't be at a disadvantage."

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, "Even with your injuries, I'm not going to be a match for you."

"Just try."

"—Fine!"

[Lineages](#)

[Zhang Sanfeng](#)

nectar, like honey or dear

Chapter 961: Zhang Ye vs. Rao Aimin!

Zhang Ye versus Yang Shu.

In just a few quick moves, the outcome was decided.

Next, Rao Aimin suggested sparring with Zhang Ye!

Honestly, Zhang Ye was really quite afraid of her. He had witnessed just how strong Rao Aimin was and knew that he was not a match for her. Even if Rao Aimin had not recovered the injuries she'd sustained at the Conference, Zhang Ye still knew his place in front of her. But since Rao Aimin was the one who'd suggested it, he could not refuse. Thinking back about all that had happened, neither Rao Aimin nor he had not talked about it much after that. It was as though they had a common understanding, or perhaps neither of them liked bothering the other. Who did you learn Taiji Fist from? What happened to Chenchen's parents all those years ago? Neither asked, and they definitely didn't exchange physical blows with each other!

But now, it seemed that Rao Aimin wanted to test Zhang Ye's skill?

Even Zhang Ye was secretly curious of Rao Aimin's martial arts.

Spar?

Then let's go!

In the blink of an eye, their chopsticks touched!

Pah!

A clear, crisp sound rang out!

Zhang Ye pulled back his chopsticks at the moment of contact and dampened the force he put in them before explosively releasing the force again, but by the time he went in for an attack, Rao Aimin's chopsticks were no longer there!

She had shifted to the kun position!

Her chopsticks reappeared in a different place!

Zhang Ye immediately twisted his wrist in that direction!

Rao Aimin flicked her chopsticks up!

The chopsticks Zhang Ye was using to grip that piece of pork belly were met with such a huge force that even his "listening power" did not help him anticipate the move. As it was too fast, he could only instinctively meet it with a dose of his "neutralizing power"!

Taiji Fist's Neutralizing Power: an advanced skill that only existed in Taiji Fist. Using the traditional martial arts terms to

describe it, there were four types of "power" in Taiji Fist. They were "sticking power," "yielding power," "drawing-in power," and "seizing power." Among them, "drawing-in power" and "seizing power" fell under the releasing of power, while "sticking power" and "yielding power" were forms of neutralizing power. During the spar with Yang Shu, Zhang Ye had used neutralizing power which encompassed mainly sticking power. In the current spar with Rao Aimin, Zhang Ye used more yielding power against her while attaching some form of sticking power in the chopsticks!

They came into contact!

The force of it pushed both of their chopsticks back toward themselves!

Clearly, Zhang Ye's chopsticks were pushed further back, but the pork was still in his possession. It was as though the pork belly were stuck to his chopsticks as he tightly gripped it. Even this exchange did not make it drop!

Rao Aimin grinned. "Interesting."

Chenchen shouted, "Aunt, that pork is mine!"

"Alright, let your aunt get it back for you!" Rao Aimin made another move.

Zhang Ye took it on with a smile. "Chenchen, will you die if you eat a little less?"

"I will!" Chenchen said matter-of-factly.

Zhang Ye said in amusement, "If you keep eating, you'll turn into a little butterball!"

Chenchen cheered her aunt on. "Hur hur, you're the little butterball. Go Aunt, you can do it!"

Rao Aimin's chopsticks came attacking again!

Zhang Ye was about to take her on, but noticed a flash of movement. The opposing chopsticks changed to a different position!

The Eight Trigrams footwork!

It was the Eight Trigrams circular footwork!

Zhang Ye immediately predicted where she would move to and determined her next position. Those 1,000 Fruits of Agility were not eaten for nothing!

It was the [qian](#) position.

But Rao Aimin flipped her wrist over and her chopsticks around in the next instant. Then she came attacking in from yet another direction and stuck fast to him—this was the Swimming Body

Eight Trigrams Palm. Every move hugged the body. It was impossible to defend against!

Zhang Ye could only meet her with force!

Twirling the chopsticks between his fingers, he swung them at Rao Aimin!

Rao Aimin changed her center of gravity and held him off!

Zhang Ye instantly pressed down!

Rao Aimin used her Swimming Body Palms!

While Zhang Ye used his sticking body techniques!

The two similar yet utterly different styles of martial arts clashed with each other!

Pah!

Both pairs of chopsticks bounced off each other again on contact!

"That should be enough." Zhang Ye rotated his aching wrist a few times and said, "We're just trying this out. Also, you're still injured. In fact, I haven't fully recovered yet either."

Rao Aimin said, "What are you talking about? We haven't even gotten serious yet."

Zhang Ye said, "If we get serious, I'm afraid that we might tear your place down."

Rao Aimin said, "You're talking rather big, eh?"

They crossed swords again with their chopsticks!

Pah!

Dah!

The force got greater!

The speed got faster!

The fighting at the dining table was simply dazzling!

The chopsticks' afterimages were darting all around! The clinking and clunking of the chopsticks resounded through the apartment!

Once!

Five times!

Ten times!

Zhang Ye suddenly felt rather drained and had no choice but to place his left hand on the tabletop to support himself. Otherwise, he might not even be able to stabilize himself. Old Rao had immense skill!

Rao Aimin was still sitting there ramrod straight without needing to grab onto anything for support!

"Go Aunt, you can do it!" Chenchen cheered!

Beside them, Yang Shu had been watching the two of them the entire time with an astounded look on her face!

One minute passed!

Two minutes passed!

All of a sudden, Zhang Ye felt he couldn't go any further. He added a gentle stream of concealed power into his moves out of nowhere and squeezed the table harder with his left hand that was supporting him!

Whoosh!

The chopsticks moved with a gust of wind!

"Then let's get serious!" Zhang Ye said.

Rao Aimin said, "Alright!"

Her eyes narrowed. Still seriously injured, she did not overextend herself and placed the elbow of her hand that was holding the chopsticks onto the table as a fulcrum. She also channeled a stream of concealed power into her attack!

Bang!

Both pairs of chopsticks collided!

The next second, under the startled gazes of Yang Shu and Chenchen, Zhang Ye's and Rao Aimin's chopsticks that had clashed started splitting in half as though they were flimsy pieces of paper being torn! It also felt like two long, thin strips of tofu had crashed in midair and smashed into pieces!

The chopsticks broke in half!

Rao Aimin's chopsticks flew behind her!

Zhang Ye's chopsticks flew to the ceiling!

Alongside that, the dining table cracked with a loud report!

The legs of the table could no longer support the pressure of both their forces. The table legs made of solid wood splintered apart as the tabletop came crashing to the floor!

It was at this juncture that Rao Aimin's left hand pulled back and caught two plates of unfinished vegetables, with one plate held between her index and middle fingers, while the other one was caught between her pinky and ring finger. Her right hand also moved as she nudged the broken chopsticks over to catch Chenchen's unfinished bowl of rice. All of these movements were executed in one perfectly smooth, flowing motion!

At the same time, Zhang Ye's wrist lowered as he acted similar to Rao Aimin. He caught his own bowl of rice, then shifted his center of gravity slightly behind and shot out his foot to catch an unfinished plate of vegetables. He caught it with the tip of his toes before steadying it to rest on his foot!

The tabletop finally hit the ground!

Thud!

The pork belly that the two of them were tussling over also fell!

The bowl of rice Rao Aimin held between her broken chopsticks was waiting below the falling pork belly right at this moment. Splat! The already cold piece of pork belly landed without any fuss into Chenchen's bowl of rice.

The sparring was over!

Rao Aimin handed the bowl of rice into Chenchen's lap. "Eat up."

The meat still made it into Chenchen's bowl in the end!

Zhang Ye found a spot to set his bowl down, then helplessly shrugged. "Let's make this clear. I'm not gonna pay for the table and chopsticks. I'm poor."

This action had sent Chenchen's pulse racing!

Next to them, Yang Shu wore an expression of shock. Suddenly she exclaimed, "Just who the hell are you two?!"

[Qian](#)

Chapter 962: Gaining a junior martial sister out of nowhere!

Old Rao's house.

The floor was a complete mess.

The watching Chenchen and Yang Shu were shocked from the start until the end by this battle of Rao Aimin versus Zhang Ye on the tabletop!

Chenchen immediately asked, "Aunt, did you win?"

Rao Aimin said, "What do you think?"

Zhang Ye said, "Your aunt didn't even give it her all."

"The two of you..." Yang Shu found it simply unbelievable.

Suddenly, Yang Shu thought of something before she finally managed to react. She stood up from her chair in an instant. "You are Grandmaster Rao Aimin!"

She finally recognized her!

Or more precisely, she had figured it out!

She had never seen Rao Aimin before, but had heard very many rumors regarding her. Moreover, she knew very well just how strong a Taiji Fist expert who had achieved concealed power was. But even so, he still could not beat her? Other than the opponent being a martial arts grandmaster, there was no explanation for this. Besides, everyone knew that there was only one female grandmaster in the entire Chinese martial arts world. According to the rumors, this female grandmaster had a rather close relationship with Zhang Ye!

As such, who else could she be other than Rao Aimin from the Eight Trigrams School?

Yang Shu felt extremely shocked as she never expected that she would encounter an expert who practiced Taiji Fist, nor unwittingly witness a spar between a Taiji Fist master and a Chinese martial arts grandmaster!

Zhang Ye looked at Yang Shu curiously and answered her question from earlier. "I should be asking you instead. Who are you really? And why do you know Taiji Fist?"

Rao Aimin looked at him. "Does she?"

"There's no mistaking it!" Zhang Ye affirmed.

Rao Aimin did not quite understand Taiji Fist, so she asked, "But why does her form look quite different from yours?"

"There are some differences in the moves, but it's really Taiji." Zhang Ye said earnestly, "That, I'm sure of."

Rao Aimin nodded. Since Zhang Ye was the expert in Taiji, if he said it was, then it definitely was!

Yang Shu's kung fu had indeed startled Zhang Ye!

She really did know Taiji Fist!

On top of that, her martial arts were very good and she was probably not too far off from achieving the use of concealed power!

Zhang Ye had not expected that a Taiji expert would suddenly pop out of nowhere like this!

In his previous world, there were many martial sects and styles of Taiji Fist. The most well-known ones were the Chen-style Taiji Fist and the Yang-style Taiji Fist. They specialized in different areas and had slightly different combat methods from each other. In fact, the Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books from the game ring that Zhang Ye had "eaten" were not considered Chen style nor Yang style. It did not specifically belong to any of the Taiji Fist styles. His Taiji forms were seemingly a combination of the different styles of Taiji Fist and drew upon the strengths of each to make up for the weaknesses of each. In other words, Zhang Ye's Taiji Fist covered a huge area and encompassed nearly every style. The other styles of Taiji Fist could be observed in his Taiji Fist as he knew a bit of every one of them. But as Zhang Ye was not a martial arts enthusiast in his previous world, nor learned Taiji, he

did not quite understand the differences. As such, he could not tell exactly which style of Taiji Fist Yang Shu's style belonged to in his previous world. However, upon further consideration, it was not actually practical to compare the Taiji Fist styles of both worlds. After all, they were unique in their own ways and should be looked at as they were.

Zhang Ye could see this.

Yang Shu naturally understood as well!

After the two Taiji Fist experts had sparred and saw each other's moves, they knew very clearly that they both belonged to the same branch!

"Who taught you Taiji Fist?" Yang Shu did not care that Rao Aimin was here anymore and fired off, "Why is your Taiji Fist so much better than mine? Who are you really?"

Zhang Ye threw up his hands. "I am Zhang Ye, and that is who I shall always be known as."

But Chenchen exposed him. "Didn't you say that your name was Chen Zhen during the Martial Arts Conference?"

Zhang Ye's face turned red. "...Can you not bring that up?"

Chenchen laughed. "Hur hur."

Yang Shu immediately asked, "Who is your master?"

"I don't have a master," Zhang Ye answered.

Yang Shu said, "That's impossible!"

Zhang Ye returned, "And who did you learn Taiji Fist from?"

Yang Shu clenched her teeth and said, "It was handed down through my family!"

Handed down through her family?

Rao Aimin narrowed her eyes. "What is the relationship between you and the Taiji grandmaster from over a hundred years ago?"

Zhang Ye stared at Yang Shu as he had wanted to ask this question for a while now.

Yang Shu proudly proclaimed, "My ancestor!"

Zhang Ye exclaimed, "Are you serious?"

Yang Shu said, "Of course I'm serious."

Holy shit!

So this woman was the true successor of Taiji in this world!

Zhang Ye wondered, "Then why didn't you show up in our martial arts world all this time? Why didn't you open a training hall? Why did you make everyone think that Taiji Fist was lost for good?"

"I..." Yang Shu looked rather embarrassed. "I have no money to open a training hall."

No money?

Oh, alright.

That was a fair enough reason!

Curious, Rao Aimin asked, "Other than you, is there anyone else who can be a successor of Taiji?"

Yang Shu pondered for a moment and shook her head before saying a little sadly, "My parents have already passed away. I'm the only Taiji Fist successor left now." Then she looked at Zhang Ye. "He's the second person I've seen who knows Taiji Fist. And the forms, skills, and moves of Taiji that he used earlier, I, I haven't ever learned of most of them! My family never taught me them."

Zhang Ye asked, "Why not?"

Yang Shu explained, "My family lived in seclusion and had never been involved with the martial arts community. My parents' generation were not talented at martial arts and only practiced it for the sake of strengthening their bodies. Much of the knowledge that was passed down from my ancestors has been lost. There's probably only about 30 to 40% left of it."

Rao Aimin made a noise in acknowledgment. "Why does he seem more authentic than a true successor of Taiji Fist like you?"

Yang Shu pulled a sullen face, saying nothing.

Zhang Ye started to feel a little uncomfortable. If he did not make something up, there was no way he would be able to trick his out of this. He couldn't possibly claim that he had learned Taiji Fist all by himself from nothing, could he? And so, this fellow said, "By chance, I received a Taiji Fist manual and learned the fist and qi flow techniques in it by myself."

Yang Shu said excitedly, "Where's the manual now?"

"Uh, I lost it," Zhang Ye said nervously.

Yang Shu was instantly disappointed. "That manual was probably handed down by my ancestors!"

Rao Aimin said, "If that is true, then could it mean that the two of

you might really be from the same martial arts branch?"

"I guess you can put it that way." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Those of Taiji are one big family. Other than the two of us, no one else in this world knows Taiji Fist." When he thought of this, Zhang Ye looked at Yang Shu in a much more affectionate way. Such an affection was really difficult to describe using words alone.

Yang Shu hesitated for a moment before nodding in agreement.

Rao Aimin taunted, "Then why don't you two battle it out? Whoever wins can proclaim themselves as the true successor of Taiji, and I can help you promote your martial arts when that time comes!"

Zhang Ye had no reply.

However, Yang Shu said, "I'm no match for him."

Rao Aimin said in all sincerity, "Young people should be more confident. This rascal has not recovered from his injuries yet, so it's a great opportunity for you to wrestle back the right of being the true successor of the Taiji Fist. I believe in you!"

"Big Sis Rao. " Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, "Can you say things that will gain you some karma instead?"

Meanwhile, Chenchen had had her fill and was getting sleepy.

"Aunt, I want to take a nap."

Rao Aimin voiced her understanding. "Alright, I'm not going to deal with your Taiji affairs anymore, so settle this between yourselves." Then she led Chenchen upstairs to rest.

Seeing that, Zhang Ye said to Yang Shu, "Let's go to my place."

"OK," Yang Shu said.

...

Next door.

At Zhang Ye's rental apartment.

"It's been a long time since I've come back here, so it's a bit messy. Feel free to take a seat." Zhang Ye quickly tidied the place up a little and picked up the things that were scattered around on the small sofa and his bed.

Yang Shu did not sit.

Zhang Ye asked, "What would you like to drink?"

Yang Shu suddenly looked at him and gave him a fist and palm salute. She shouted a salutation that made Zhang Ye feel awkward.

"Senior Brother!"

Senior Brother?

What Senior Brother!

Zhang Ye hurriedly said, "Please don't call me that."

Yang Shu insisted, "It doesn't matter where you learned your Taiji Fist. The two of us are still practitioners of Taiji. You said so earlier yourself that those of Taiji are one big family. And now we're the only two left in this world who know Taiji Fist. Since you're slightly older than me and your martial arts are also slightly...much better than mine, you are naturally my senior brother!"

"Just call me Zhang Ye."

"Yes, Senior Brother."

"You can also call me Old Zhang."

"OK, Senior Brother."

Zhang Ye smacked his lips. "Forget it, just call me whatever you like."

Yang Shu replied in a serious tone, "Senior Brother, now that we are the only two left of Taiji, we have a very heavy burden to bear. We are tasked with glorifying the martial art of Taiji Fist again. In the past, I always thought that I was the only person left to shoulder this heavy burden. But now that I've met you, I know that this is something that concerns both of us. My only dream in this lifetime is to make Taiji Fist become famous everywhere. I've decided that I won't be leaving anymore now that I'm here in Beijing! I know that you must have the same thoughts as me, so let's work hard, hand in hand, toward that goal!"

Ah?

Bear a heavy burden?

Tasked?

I've never had such a fucking thought!

Zhang Ye coughed and said, "I think it's better to take it slow."

"Senior Brother, can you teach me Taiji Fist?"

"Don't you already know how?"

"What I know is not complete."

"Oh, sure then."

"Senior Brother, please lend me some money."

"What for?"

"I don't have any food money."

"Uh, is 2,000 yuan enough?"

"Yes."

"Alright, here you go."

"Senior Brother, I don't have a place to stay."

"Ah? Then what're you gonna do?"

"Can I stay here at your place?"

"Stay here?"

"Yeah. Isn't your house empty?"

"...Fine."

"Senior Brother."

"Big Sis, what else?"

"Oh, nothing. I just wanted to call you that."

"..."

He had gained a junior martial sister out of nowhere, but lost his wallet and apartment in the process. Zhang Ye was still reeling from the turn of events. Without knowing how, things had somehow fucking become like this!

When he first saw Yang Shu, Zhang Ye felt that she was a rash person. But it was only now that he realized his instinct was right. This woman truly considered him family!

Chapter 963: A subordinate in trouble!

At night.

Zhang Ye only got home after 8 PM.

His mother asked, "Why'd you just get back?"

"I've took a friend out to sightsee." Zhang Ye felt exhausted. "We visited the [Forbidden City](#), [Qianmen Street](#), and the [Summer Palace](#). Quickly get me something to drink."

His mother handed him a drink. "Who's your friend?"

"A friend from out of town." Zhang Ye did not elaborate.

He essentially did nothing the entire day except accompany his newly gained junior martial sister on a sightseeing tour of the capital. Besides, he could not really turn her down. Her parents were no longer around and she had traveled very far to look for him, even acknowledging him as "family" after that and addressing him as "Senior Brother." No matter how thick-skinned Zhang Ye was, he couldn't just leave her alone. After all, it was true that there were only the two of them left in their generation of the Taiji branch of martial arts.

His father lowered the television volume and looked at him, saying, "You ran around the country for a while a month ago, so why are you still not acting proper now that you're back?"

Zhang Ye acknowledged, "Alright, I'll work properly tomorrow."

His mother badgered, "Your popularity isn't moving much."

"Is that so?" Zhang Ye had not been paying attention to it recently.

His mother said, "You're still at the bottom of the A-list celebrity rankings. That's what you get for not having any new works for the past month. If not for that car crash between you and Jiang Hanwei creating some buzz, that previous A-list celebrity, who is now first place in the B-list rankings, would have overtaken you. Aren't you worried?"

Zhang Ye grunted. "OK, I know what to do."

Back in his room, he gave the Celebrity Rankings Index a quick browse.

Sure enough, his popularity score was almost falling off the A-list rankings again. This was mainly because Zhang Ye had not released any new works nor had any exposure for the past month when he went to attend the National Martial Arts Conference. Actually, it was only Zhang Ye who would dare to do something like this. If it were any other A-list celebrities who did not appear on the news for a month? Nor take part in any events, shows, or interviews that would give them onscreen exposure? That would be as good as digging their own grave! For a celebrity, having constant exposure to the public was something that was even more

important than their lives!

Moreover, the competition at this tier was very fierce. If your popularity did not keep growing, it would just drop lower. Would any celebrities at this tier be easy to deal with? All of them had fairly large fan bases, so it wouldn't be surprising if any one of them became famous overnight and jumped onto the A-list. That was why Zhang Ye's position was still quite precarious and why he would definitely like to get out of this unstable position as soon as possible and keep increasing his popularity score. It wasn't easy for him to get onto the A-list rankings, so he couldn't just give it back so easily. As there were numerous B-list celebrities behind him eyeing him, he knew that he could not remain stagnant.

He decided to go to bed first.

When he rose in the morning, he would carefully plan and look for something to do next.

He fell asleep immediately when he laid down.

One hour.

Three hours.

Some time in the night, his cell phone suddenly rang!

Zhang Ye subconsciously rejected the first call and went back to sleep. However, it rang again and Zhang Ye wondered to himself

who could be calling in the middle of the night!

He looked at his watch and saw that it was 3 AM!

Then he looked at the caller ID and saw who was calling. Ha Qiqi?

Zhang Ye became slightly more awake. If it were reporters or nuisances calling at this time, he would not bother with them at all. But as Ha Qiqi was his deputy who had always been a composed person, and now that Zhang Zuo and she were directing a new documentary on air pollution, Zhang Ye knew that Old Ha would definitely not call him at 3 AM if it weren't something serious. And she'd even called twice?

He immediately answered: "Sister Ha, what's the matter?"

Ha Qiqi said in a slightly listless voice: "Director Zhang, sorry for disturbing your sleep."

"It's fine. Please speak." Zhang Ye sat up in bed.

"I..."

"Just what is it?"

Ha Qiqi said: "They didn't want to tell you this, but I feel that I have to tell you about it no matter what." She paused and fell silent

for a few seconds. "Can you make a trip to the hospital? Something has happened to Huang Dandan!"

Huang Dandan?

Tong Fu's girlfriend?

Zhang Ye hastily asked: "What happened to Little Huang?"

"She was just diagnosed with lung cancer."

Zhang Ye's mind reeled as he sat on his bed in shock. "Impossible!" He threw aside his blanket and got out of bed before asking in a raised voice: "Which hospital? Which ward? I'll be right there!"

He put on his clothes!

He went downstairs and drove off!

On his way there, Huang Dandan's face kept appearing in his mind. He had a very deep impression of this subordinate of his. Little Huang didn't start on The Voice's program team, but rather was an employee of the documentary channel. When Zhang Ye went over, he chose her and her boyfriend, Tong Fu, along with some other employees of Department 14 and established the program team for A Bite of China. When they were filming A Bite of China, as female member of the team, Little Huang had followed their group of men and overcome the treacherous mountain hikes

without a single complaint. She was even tougher than most of her male colleagues, and from time to time, she could even liven up the atmosphere as the happiest person on the team. Everyone liked her presence very much!

Lung cancer?

Zhang Ye could not accept it!

...

3:30 AM.

At the Department of Thoracic Surgery, Beijing Cancer Hospital.

When Zhang Ye finally arrived at the hospital, Yan Tianfei's secretary had just arrived as well. The two of them went upstairs together and saw quite a few people around the ward. All of them were Department 14 staff!

Ha Qiqi was talking to a doctor.

Zhang Zuo and Wu Yi were clenching their fists in anxiety.

Tong Fu was squatting by himself in a corner, in a daze and not speaking. The moment Tong Fu saw Zhang Ye, his nose wrinkled and his eyes suddenly welled with tears. "Director Zhang!"

Everyone looked over!

"Director Zhang!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Little Huang is...she's..."

Little Wang teared up as she had always the closest to Huang Dandan.

Zhang Ye said loudly, "What the hell is going on?"

Zhang Zuo said, "After you left yesterday afternoon, Little Huang started coughing violently when we were eating out for lunch. At first, we didn't think much of it because Little Huang hadn't been feeling well due to her month-long cold. But later on, she suddenly choking and her face turned blue. We then realized it was serious and rapidly sent her to a small hospital nearby. After they examined her, the doctor advised us to transfer her to a different hospital. Only then did we learn that something was wrong! In the end, they had her sent here to the Beijing Cancer Hospital. She did her checkups and lab tests during the day. A portion of the test results just came out!"

Zhang Ye said angrily, "Why didn't anyone tell me sooner?"

Ha Qiqi said, "Tong Fu and Little Huang said that you were busy and didn't want us to tell you!"

"Something this big has happened and you guys still want to keep it from me? You guys are something!" Zhang Ye was angered for real. He said to the physician, "Doctor, you're positive that it's... lung cancer?"

The physician recognized Zhang Ye, but did not act surprised at seeing him at a time like this. He said, "We've diagnosed her on the whole. It'll take until tomorrow morning for the rest of the test results to come out."

Zhang Ye took a deep breath and asked, "What stage is it at?"

The physician said, "The preliminary diagnosis shows that it's at the early stage."

Zhang Ye quickly asked, "Early stage? Then she can get completely cured?"

The physician hesitated for a second. "She first has to get surgery. After that, it'll depend on the patient's will to live. Just because the cancer is at an early stage doesn't mean she be cured. It's just that the five-year survival rate for early stage lung cancer is higher than at the later stages."

Survival rate!

These words were heart-wrenching to those present!

Zhang Ye clenched his teeth. "She's only in her twenties!"

The physician sighed. "I know."

"Little Huang doesn't even smoke!" Zhang Ye said in a questioning tone.

The physician nodded. "She doesn't."

Zhang Ye asked, "Does her family have any history of such a disease?"

The physician said, "No."

Agitated, Zhang Ye said, "Then how could she have lung cancer? That doesn't make any sense at all!"

That's right!

Why?

No one in Department 14 could understand!

The physician looked around at them. "According to the clinical and pathological diagnoses, it is lung cancer. We can at most inform her family members that this is lung cancer with no known cause. We won't tell them anything more than that. However,

based on my clinical knowledge and some of the pulmonary tests, I can tell all of you this with certainty." He suddenly took out a few of the x-ray films and laboratory reports and said, "I'm 90% certain that the cause of Ms. Huang Dandan's lung cancer is due to the air pollution around us, or what we colloquially refer to as...smog! She doesn't smoke nor have any family history of lung cancer, and is also very young. But she still has to breathe every day, every moment, and the pollutants in the air will follow her respiratory tract into her body and damage and infect her—this is the cause of the so-called lung cancer with no known cause!"

Zhang Ye asked, "Can you confirm that?"

The physician nodded. "The number of similar cases have been multiplying in recent years." He pointed to a nearby ward. "Over there are two cancer patients who got admitted here today before your case. They had the same circumstances—they did not smoke, had no family history of cancer, and did not work in hazardous environments, but they still got diagnosed with cancer all the same. Tell me, why do you think that is? Besides, I checked and know that Little Huang's hometown is in Shanxi. That province is known to be heavily polluted."

The physician changed the topic. "It's quite late. The other patients still have to rest, so don't have too many people stay behind. Go home for now." He then walked away.

He left behind a group of Department 14 staff who felt very angry!

Air pollution?

It was actually caused by the air pollution that they had been investigating for the past month!?

The ward's door opened.

A female employee of Department 14 came out and wiped away some tears from the corners of her eyes. "Little Huang wants everyone to go inside."

Zhang Ye immediately stepped into the ward. "Little Huang!"

The lights were on inside the room. Huang Dandan was lying on the bed, her face haggard and pallid. She had an oxygen mask on to help her breathe. "Director Zhang, why are you here too? I've told them not to tell you about this."

Zhang Ye said, "How can I not be here! Rest assured, Little Huang. Don't worry too much. The doctor said that you're at the early stage of the cancer, so you'll definitely recover! We'll always be by your side!"

Little Wang said, "Right!"

Ha Qiqi said, "We're all here for you!"

Wu Yi said, "Everyone will always be by your side!"

Zhang Zuo said, "Just rest up and don't think about anything else. We will come and visit you every day!"

Looking at Huang Dandan's condition, everyone's heart ached.

However, Huang Dandan shook her head. "I can bear this. You don't need to be by my side or come here."

"Dandan!" Tong Fu was nearly in tears.

Huang Dandan looked at everyone and suddenly said, "Can you guys promise me one thing?"

Zhang Ye said, "Whatever you say!"

Ha Qiqi quickly said, "However many requests you have, we'll definitely give you our word!"

Huang Dandan's tone became very determined all of a sudden. "I overheard what the doctor said just now. Don't worry about me. You guys must take my place and produce the air pollution documentary. We can't let the citizens stay in the dark. Don't let the same thing happen to other people, alright?"

"Dandan!" Little Wang teared up again.

Zhang Ye straightened his face as he said through set teeth, "Alright, I promise! I will make sure that everyone gets to see this

documentary!"

"Thank you, Director Zhang." Huang Dandan fell asleep content.

After the group left the ward, they went downstairs.

Zhang Ye stood in the lobby and suddenly announced loudly to everyone of Department 14, "From today onward, from now onward, our Department 14 will fight to the bitter end against...air pollution!"

"Fight it!"

"Motherfucker!"

"To the bitter end!"

"To the bitter end!"

The people of Department 14 were furious!

[Forbidden City](#)

[Qianmen Street](#)

[Summer Palace](#)

Chapter 964: Barred from broadcast!

7 o'clock in the morning.

At Central TV.

The other channels and departments were not at work yet. Many of their offices were still empty, but Department 14's office was already working at full capacity!

Every staff member was present!

"Where's the script?"

"We're making copies of it now! It'll be ready immediately!"

"Get the Ministry of Environmental Protection's number!"

"I have it here!"

"Who's going to interview Chief Xu?"

"Me! I'll go!"

"Director Zhang? You're going to handle it yourself?"

"Yes!"

"Then I'll get it arranged for you immediately!"

"Director Ha, the animated short is ready. Can you take a look to see if it's OK?"

An hour later.

The Central TV employees gradually arrived for work. When those who passed by Department 14's office saw what was going on inside, all of them, without an exception, froze in their tracks. They discovered that the people of the Documentary Channel were all seemingly different today. They were all busy working. No one was playing games or idly chitchatting. Each person seemed like a sharp sword, looking very persistent, tough, and angry!

What was going on?

Just what was going on?

A curious person from Department 13 went over and asked, "Old Wu, what are you guys..."

Someone who knew what had happened quickly pulled that person back. "Don't bother asking. Something happened to their department's Huang Dandan!"

"What happened to her?"

"Lung cancer."

"What did you just say? How could that happen?"

"Yeah, she's still so young!"

"How'd you know?"

"I heard it from someone this morning. Apparently, it was caused by the smog!"

"This..."

"No wonder! No wonder the people of Department 14 are working so hard!"

"Smog? Is the smog really that harmful?"

"It can even cause lung cancer?"

"Why didn't I know about this? They didn't report it on the news either?"

"I know that the smog is pretty bad, but no one has ever told me that it could cause lung cancer? And how could the chances of it

developing be so high? I saw Huang Dandan just yesterday!"

"I don't know."

"Is the smog really that harmful?"

In just one afternoon, the news had spread all around Central TV!

Several heads of other departments came looking for Yan Tianfei to show their support.

Some of the channels even suggested to hold a fundraiser for Huang Dandan out of goodwill, but were rejected by Yan Tianfei and Tong Fu. Huang Dandan traveling around the country to the regions most affected by the smog was an aggravating factor in the lung cancer developing. As a result, Huang Dandan's case was considered a workplace injury. Yan Tianfei had already gone to the relevant departments to check out the procedures to take. The medical expenses were all submitted so that Huang Dandan and her family wouldn't need to have any additional burdens. Yan Tianfei had taken care of all this already.

...

One day.

Two days.

Three days.

The staff of Department 14 were all working harder than the other. Under this high intensity work pace, in only three days, they had finished the latter half of the documentary that spanned four episodes. Together with the work done in the previous month, the entire documentary was completed!

In the end, it was Zhang Ye who took on the responsibility of editing the show. He had edited out the parts which were most controversial and did not follow his previous world's version of Chai Jing's Documentary on Air Pollution in China. He also chose a different way of presentation for the broadcast and added in some of his own content. The overall edit made it quite different from the original as he was afraid that it would not pass for broadcast, which was why he had taken out the most controversial parts of it in the first place, although not all of it could be edited out and had to remain in the final cut.

On this day, the documentary was completed!

Ha Qiqi heaved a sigh of relief. "It's finally done!"

"I'm gonna pass out from exhaustion!" Zhang Zuo had nearly collapsed.

Little Wang said excitedly, "This is great. I'll call Dandan and tell her!"

Tong Fu asked anxiously, "Director Zhang, when can it get broadcast?"

Zhang Ye asked, "What's the matter?"

Tong Fu said, "Dandan's surgery is scheduled for next week, so I hope that she can get to watch it before then!"

Zhang Ye immediately said, "Alright, let me speak to Director Yan about this."

Zhang Ye went to Yan Tianfei's office and discussed the documentary with him. After Yan Tianfei finished watching the final cut of the documentary, he was extremely satisfied with it. He immediately submitted for approval in the hopes that they would be able to get it out for broadcast by next week while they concentrated on the promotions this week!

However, what no one expected was that the next day, the decision of Central TV was announced abruptly: Department 14's 'The Pollution Problem' does not pass muster and has been barred from broadcast. All related work and promotions of the documentary would be stopped with immediate effect as well!

Department 14 reacted explosively!

Ha Qiqi slammed her hands on the table. "How could they make a decision like that!"

Zhang Zuo glared into the distance and said, "Why are they barring it from broadcast? Why?"

Little Wang said, "What on earth happened?"

Everyone was in disbelief. The many days of their efforts to rush out the documentary before Huang Dandan's surgery was now met with Central TV's decision to bar it from broadcast? There wasn't even an option to make changes to it and was instead shut down upon submission?

A decision like this was an extremely rare occurrence!

It had occurred just a handful of times at Central TV!

Yan Tianfei was furious and went to find the station head. When the people of Department 14 learned about this, they all followed Yan Tianfei!

The Station Head's office was packed with a lot of people!

"Why?"

"What regulations did we violate?"

"This is a public service documentary!"

"Station Head, why aren't we allowed to broadcast the documentary?"

Nobody could accept this!

The station head who oversaw the approval board looked at them, frowned, and said, "I watched the documentary. If you people only mentioned that the smog was harmful, no one would have batted an eyelid. But why must the source of the smog be brought into it as well? Pollution caused by the burning of coal? Pollution caused by steel making? That isn't going to be acceptable!"

Yan Tianfei said in annoyance, "Why not?"

The station head said, "You're asking me why not? Can the country not burn coal? Can the country not produce steel? What's the point of bringing up those things? It will just create a very negative impact all around! If this actually triggers a societal upheaval or conflict, who will be responsible for it? You? Can you bear that responsibility? Even Central TV couldn't bear this responsibility, much less you!"

Zhang Ye came into the office from outside. "If we don't mention the source of the air pollution, what is the point of making the documentary? What should we tell the audience? Tell them that the smog is harmful! That it is very harmful! That it is extremely harmful! But we have to keep the source of the pollution a secret, we can't tell you about it. So don't bother with taking measures against this. Even if the smog is heavy, you still have to breathe it in. Even if the smog is heavy, there's nothing you can do about it!

Is that how it goes?"

The station head said in displeasure, "In your documentary, you claimed that the smog was the cause of lung cancer. But do you have any scientific grounds for saying that? Do you? If you do, show it to me!"

Zhang Ye looked at him. "A lot of the organizations that investigated this found that there is a correlation between the degree of air pollution and the number of lung cancer cases!"

The station head shook his head. "I'm asking you now, do you have any scientific grounds for saying that? What grounds do you have? A national report? Where is the report then? You said that the smog was the cause of lung cancer and a variety of other respiratory diseases, and could even cause pathological changes? You're fearmongering! Everything these days has to be based on science!"

Yan Tianfei shouted, "So many people died in the past in other countries due to smog. Tell me then, how did those people die?"

The station head said, "I don't know how they died, and neither do I care. All I know is that you people are fearmongering. There are some topics that people like you should never touch, even if it's for a documentary that you're doing! If it isn't handled well, things will boil over!"

Zhang Ye could not take this anymore. "Due to the smog, a lot of people have already died. Everyone can see this, yet you're asking

me to fucking provide you with evidence? Asking if we have any scientific grounds for our claims? Have you gone blind? Do I look like a scientist to you? Then let me ask you! Does traditional Chinese medicine have any scientific basis to it? Explain to me the scientific principles behind it! Explain to me the scientific purpose of taking someone's pulse! Explain all of that to me!"

The station head clearly had no answers to his questions, but he did not approve the broadcast of the documentary either!

Further, the station issued direct punishment an hour later!

The leaders of Department 14 have led others to cause trouble!

Zhang Ye is suspended for a month!

Yan Tianfei is suspended for a month!

The entire Department 14 staff shall have their monthly bonuses deducted!

A large-scale punishment like this almost never happened at Central TV, but it seemed like the station was very determined in their way of handling things this time!

Yan Tianfei slammed his hands on the table and cursed!

The entire Department 14 also cursed!

"Fuck!"

"How could they bar the documentary from broadcast just like that?"

"The statistics that we collected were all from professional institutes!"

"Right, how did it become fearmongering?"

Zhang Ye was exasperated!

He had already taken great care dealing with this problem!

Others might not know it, but he did. In his previous world, Chai Jing's Documentary on Air Pollution in China had stirred up a lot of trouble, causing turmoil at almost every level of the country's hierarchy. A lot of people had been shocked by the documentary and become afraid of the smog for the first time in their lives. But there were also a lot of people who had questioned it and relentlessly found ways to raise doubts against Chai Jing and her documentary!

That was why Zhang Ye had been treading so carefully!

Calling for capital reform? He did not include that!

Calling for reduced coal usage? He did not include that!

Statistics from foreign institutes? He did not include that!

Above all, he did not call for any urgent economic restructuring of the nation!

He had removed all of the controversial points of Chai Jing's documentary so that he could make a purely public service documentary that would inform the citizens of the harmfulness of the smog and where the smog originated! Zhang Ye was careful, cautious, and on guard at every turn, but he never thought that the documentary would still get barred from broadcast!

Little Wang said anxiously, "I told Dandan over the phone that the documentary has been completed. But now, what are we going to tell her? We won't be allowed to broadcast it? We can't get it out for broadcast?"

Tong Fu said angrily, "During the past few days that Dandan's been hospitalized, she's kept asking about the progress of the documentary. She...She..."

Everyone fell silent. With Central TV issuing the ban, Department 14 had no way to broadcast it. This was the ironclad truth!

What should they do?

There was no way out!

Director Yan was suspended!

"Director Zhang!"

"Director Zhang, what should we do?"

Ha Qiqi looked at him.

Zhang Zuo looked at him.

Everyone from Department 14 looked at him.

Zhang Ye did not say anything. He walked back into his own office and called Wu Zeqing. After explaining everything to her, he wanted to listen to her opinion.

"You want my opinion?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll tell you that it's best not to broach this subject. It's very sensitive so it'd be best to stay as far away from it as possible."

"Alright, I understand."

"But if you insist on it, you have my support."

"Thank you."

Old Wu's words revealed a lot to him. At her level of work, she definitely came into contact with many people and knew many things!

This was a minefield!

Whoever touched it would be done for!

Whoever touched it would die!

The strong reaction from Central TV said it all!

But!

Zhang Ye had always believed that in the long passage of history, such matters could not stay hidden for long. No one might talk about it this year or next year, but what about a hundred years later? Two hundred years?

Someone would definitely have to be the first to do it!

Someone would definitely have to make the sacrifice!

Zhang Ye poured some tea he'd brewed for himself and took a sip of it before closing his eyes to think. He thought about it for a long time.

He...was willing to be that someone!

Chapter 965: Let me bear the burden of these criticisms!

On the same day.

The news was already reporting on this matter.

"Zhang Ye's new documentary has been banned!"

"Nothing to follow up with after A Bite of China!"

"A documentary on air pollution? Barred before broadcast!"

"The decline of Zhang Ye?"

"Central TV Documentary Channel no longer able to replicate the miracle of A Bite of China!"

"Why did a public service documentary get barred from broadcast?"

On Weibo, many netizens were not having any of it!

"What is this?"

"Barred from broadcast? Fuck! I didn't even get to watch it!"

"What is this about it getting barred before its broadcast?"

"I've been looking forward to Zhang Ye's new documentary all this while. Although this documentary was not directed by Teacher Zhang, it was still made by him. Why is it gone?"

"Give me back my documentary!"

"Central TV is so awful!"

"I think there's some news that you guys might be still be unaware of?"

"What news?"

One of the program team members of A Bite of China was diagnosed with lung cancer several days ago!"

"Ah?"

"What?"

"Hai, she's just twenty-something. Teacher Zhang did not plan to be involved with this documentary initially as he was already about to leave Central TV. But he came back to take charge of it because that team member's lung cancer was seemingly caused by the smog."

"Surely that can't be true?"

"Can smog really cause lung cancer?"

"Are you serious? Don't scare me like that, alright?"

"An employee of Department 14 has been diagnosed with cancer. Why is Central TV still barring them from broadcasting the documentary? They really aren't sympathetic, are they? Would Teacher Zhang agree to that?"

"This makes me want to watch the documentary even more now! The news has often talked about being more aware of the smog and saying that the air pollution is harmful. But why do they not explain to us why it is harmful? Or tell us how they're going to govern and manage it? What's the meaning of that! Everyone's in a fog! They know that there is the smog, but no one knows what the hell it is! Was Teacher Zhang trying to tell us? And then got barred from broadcasting it?"

This topic was heatedly discussed on the Internet!

A lot of people were cursing at Central TV, but there were also a lot who did not know what had happened!

In this world, the study of PM2.5 was still in its infancy. There were a lot of things regarding it that most citizens did not understand, with about 95% of them not even knowing that they

should have the habit of wearing a face mask outside on a smoggy day. Nobody thought much of this issue and were not nervous about it. This was also the reason for Zhang Ye and Department 14's urgency in making this documentary. But now it was all in vain!

...

At Central TV.

In the Documentary Channel's office.

It was almost time to knock off, but no one was preparing to leave yet. Everyone stayed behind and kept cursing and scolding. There were even some people who talked about wanting to quit their jobs!

"This is too much!"

"Dandan is gonna get surgery soon!"

"How are we going to explain it to Dandan? How do we break this to her?"

"We can't just leave it as that!"

"Right! We must think of a solution!"

Ha Qiqi dropped something heavily onto the table and said, "I'll go see the station head again!"

"Let's go together!" Zhang Zuo couldn't stand it anymore either!

"Let's go together!"

"Yeah, together!"

Everyone responded angrily!

They asked themselves if they had done anything wrong to deserve this!

They asked themselves if any of their statistics were not obtained from a professional institute!

But why did it end up with the station head accusing them in this way? And punishing them too? Why could they not inform the citizens of where the smog originated and how harmful it could get? Why couldn't they let the citizens know the truth?

They did not understand!

So they were very angry!

Across the room, Zhang Ye had just come out from his office.

"Director Zhang!"

"Come with us!"

"Let's go and see the head!"

"I don't believe that we can't justify our position!"

The people of Department 14 were in a state of frenzy.

But then, Zhang Ye looked at everyone and said, "Don't bother looking for him. There's no point in doing so either. Without approval from the station, we'll never get the go-ahead to broadcast our documentary."

Ha Qiqi said, "But!"

"No buts." Zhang Ye waved his hand. "It's time to leave and go on home, everyone. There's no need to contemplate the documentary issue any further."

Zhang Zuo stared at him wide-eyed. "Are you saying we should just let it be?"

Zhang Ye said, "What else can be done? The footage has already been taken away by the station's people."

Little Wang could not believe that Zhang Ye was saying something like this. "Director Zhang, what's with you? This, this isn't your style. If this were the past, you'd definitely..."

Zhang Ye said, "I'd definitely what? The station has already indicated to us that our documentary would cause more harm than good. I have nothing I can do, so we can only leave it as is for now. Everyone, let's stop kicking up a fuss already and head on back home."

Ha Qiqi was angered by this. She shouted, "Director Zhang! Then who's gonna be responsible for Dandan's cancer? Dandan's been laying in her sickbed without airing a single grievance. All she wants is to prevent what happened to her from happening to anyone else! She just wanted our documentary to inform the citizens so that they'd know about the harmfulness of the smog! Yes, I accept that the station head's words were right. Even if some of the statistics we obtained were genuine and from official institutes, but there are no scientific grounds to them! Statistics are just statistics and can only be used for scientific interpretation. They can't be considered scientific fact! But even if it really turns out to be wrong, even if the smog is actually not harmful at all, we still want to make this matter public! We still want to scare the people into thinking! To make them learn about the smog and let them be afraid of it. Even if we have to face a lifetime of criticism, we're willing to accept it!"

"Right!"

"All of us are willing to accept it!"

"We're not afraid of getting scolded! In the past year, haven't we already been scolded a lot?"

"Director Zhang, we cannot just let this be!"

"This documentary is the fruit of everyone's labor!"

Zhang Zuo stared straight into Zhang Ye's eyes. "You promised Dandan personally! You said that you'd make sure everyone gets to see this documentary!"

Tong Fu clenched his fists. "Director Zhang!"

Zhang Ye looked at all of them. "Are you guys finished?"

No one spoke.

Zhang Ye nodded. "OK, if you are, then head on home. Let's not bring this up again. Go back home and pack up your feelings. We still have to prepare for the next documentary, maybe something about gourmet or animals. Any subject is fine."

Ha Qiqi suddenly asked, "Is this coming from the bottom of your heart?"

Zhang Ye threw up his hands. "Then what do you want me to do?"

"Director Zhang, I was wrong about you!" Ha Qiqi turned around and left!

Zhang Zuo hesitated for a bit before giving a long sigh. He walked off as well!

Zhang Ye abruptly said, "There's something else. Right now, there's a lot of attention on our documentary from the media and the people. There's huge ruckus online, so we can't just stay quiet and offer no explanation about it. We'll apply to the management for a venue to hold a press conference regarding this issue. It'd be best if the venue is a large one so that we can fit in all the media outlets and reporters for the press conference. At that time, I will personally go onstage and give an excuse for the barring of our documentary from broadcast."

Ha Qiqi did not even turn her head. "Got it!"

Zhang Ye felt reluctant. "This will be very important."

Zhang Zuo turned around and said, "I'll write a report for it tonight."

"OK." Zhang Ye nodded.

Little Wang said angrily, "You still intend to clear it up? Give an excuse? What's there to excuse! What's there for us to explain! We did not do anything wrong in the first place! Director Zhang, why,

why are doing this!"

Tong Fu looked at Zhang Ye. "Are you still the Director Zhang I know?"

Little Wang pulled at Tong Fu. "Let's go!"

Gradually, everyone left the office!

Everyone wore the same expression of disappointment!

Soon, Zhang Ye was left in the office by himself.

Outside, it had turned dark. Smog blotted out the moonlight. When he looked out through the window, the night looked gloomy in a rather depressed and somewhat lonesome manner.

Zhang Ye quietly walked over to the office's main door and closed it. Creak. The sound of the door closing was particularly loud in the silence of the office. He walked back in, and suddenly bent over and turned on a computer, then another, and a third one. These computers had previously been used to store the data for the air pollution documentary, but were wiped clean after the people from Central TV's management came over in the afternoon.

He turned them on.

Typed on the keyboard.

Zhang Ye performed a series of complicated operations on them. If there were any technicians present, they would know that Zhang Ye was recovering the files and data that were still retained on the hard drives!

Five...

Ten...

Twenty...

Little by little, the data were restored!

One by one, the sections of video and interview material reappeared on the screens!

All of a sudden, Zhang Ye thought of those words Ha Qiqi uttered to him before she left. He couldn't refrain from chuckling, and felt quite proud of her at heart. Make the people learn know about the smog? Let them know so that they would be afraid? Even if they had to face a lifetime of criticism, they would accept it?

Well said!

That's my team!

You're all good people!

However, this is no trifling matter. This is a major issue that will tear a hole in the sky! How could I let you guys face these criticisms? How could I let you sacrifice yourselves? All of you are still powerless right now. If you guys offend someone, or if someone tries to find trouble with you guys, how could you handle it? You have wives and kids, husbands and parents. When it comes to handling the pressure from such criticisms, can any of you truly bear it?

Forget it.

It's no coincidence that I'm not afraid of trouble, have never been afraid of offending others, and am always very controversial. So I don't care if I'm charged with another count. I'm your boss. If anything happened, could I let you guys take the blame? All of you have really underestimated me, Zhang Ye!

So let me bear the burden of these criticisms instead.

Chapter 966: The press conference begins!

A few days later.

Saturday.

On the day of the press conference.

Morning, at the Department of Thoracic Surgery, Beijing Cancer Hospital.

"Dandan," Tong Fu said.

Huang Dandan shook her head. "That's impossible!"

Beside her, Little Wang said with a sunken expression, "Director Zhang really said that."

Huang Dandan said in disbelief, "Don't you guys know what kind of person Director Zhang is?"

"I know." Tong Fu grit his teeth and said, "But he's really going to stop caring about this. He instructed us to not get involved nor bring it up again. Even when we wanted to go and protest against the heads a second time, he stopped us from going!"

Little Wang said in resentment, "Our documentary definitely can't make it to broadcast anymore as the footage has been deleted."

The press conference will be held today, and we'll be explaining to the reporters and public the reason why the documentary was taken down. It's 7 AM now. In two more hours, the press conference will begin!"

Huang Dandan kept shaking her head.

Tong Fu said, "I can actually understand Director Zhang's decision. He will be leaving Central TV soon, so if he gets into trouble at this stage, it'll greatly affect him. Since we already know that our documentary will likely offend a lot of people, nobody would want to get themselves involved in such a mess. Director Zhang also—"

"Don't speak any further!" Huang Dandan interrupted him angrily. "All of you, please leave!"

Little Wang said, "Dandan, why are you—"

Huang Dandan ignored her. "Please go back!"

"Th-Then we'll head on to work. Rest up and listen to the doctor." Tong Fu had no choice but to leave with Little Wang and another colleague who was also visiting.

"What should we do?"

"Just give Dandan some time alone."

"Hai, she definitely can't accept that either."

"This time, Director Zhang is really—"

"Don't. Director Zhang has done a lot for everyone."

"Let's go back then. There's still a lot of things to handle at the press conference venue."

...

Meanwhile.

At SARFT HQ.

Wu Zeqing walked into the office building.

"Eh."

"Chief Wu!"

"Chief Wu, good morning."

"Ah, Chief Wu!"

Many people were momentarily stunned. Today was Saturday, as well as public holiday. Besides, didn't Chief Wu attend a meeting in Shanghai yesterday? Didn't she originally plan to return on Sunday? Then why did Chief Wu come back to work today? Uh, did something happen at the office? Why wasn't there any news of that then?

The employees started gossiping.

Soon, Wu Zeqing's secretary, Bai Li rushed back in a hurry.

In the office.

Bai Li was quite surprised. "Chief Wu, what made you come back today? Wasn't the meeting in Shanghai slated to end on Sunday?"

Wu Zeqing said nonchalantly, "There might be something happening today, so I came back in advance."

Bai Li exclaimed, "What's going to happen?"

Wu Zeqing did not answer her. She just said, "If something happens today, tell me immediately. I will be in my office the entire day."

Terrified, Bai Li said, "Uh, OK."

Just what was going on?

Even Chief Wu had to come back in anticipation of something?

Was a disaster going to occur?!

...

At Central TV.

At the press conference venue.

"I'm from the Beijing Times."

"Oh, please enter."

"I'm from the News Channel and this is my reporter pass."

"Alright, please enter."

"I'm with Tianjin TV."

"Welcome. Please enter."

The reporters and camera operators were gradually admitted into the venue. Some of them were setting up their equipment and testing their video cameras, while others were exchanging words

in twos and threes.

"Why is it being held at such a big venue?"

"I heard that there will be over a hundred reporters attending."

"That many?"

"Yeah. Department 14's new documentary was rejected, so a lot of people are focusing their attention on them."

"That's true. We still don't know the reason behind it."

"We'll probably find out in a while."

"I heard that the entire Department 14 was punished and even warned!"

"Due to what reason?"

"Who knows! Isn't it just a documentary about air pollution? How big of an affair could it be?"

"It seems that the smog can cause diseases."

"Come on, that's all nonsense, no? It is the same as pesticides on vegetables. No matter how much you try to wash them away, the

veggies won't be 100% clean. There will still be some residue left in the vegetables. Even though the residue is poisonous, a small intake of it won't affect the body, so nothing will happen. The issue of the smog is likely the same, and it doesn't happen every day anyway. Today's weather looks just fine to me."

"Yeah, if the smog really is hazardous, the station would already have gotten us to investigate and do a report on it, but have any of you received instructions to do so in the past two years?"

"Nope."

"We didn't get such instructions from our station either."

"I did receive one, but our investigations showed nothing. The officials did not even give us a proper definition of what smog is. There were some similar cases overseas as well, but their circumstances should be different from our country's. This PM2.5 issue was only brought up recently, in the past two years."

Even a lot of the reporters working on the front lines had only a passing knowledge of it.

This was the current state of this world's knowledge and understanding of smog. It was a very different from Zhang Ye's previous world. The people of this world were still at the preliminary stage of discovery regarding smog. Ignoring the fact of how hazardous it was, nobody even seemed like they knew if the smog was harmful to their bodies.

Not far away.

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others were busy working.

But from the looks of it, everyone from Department 14 seemed to be going about their work very listlessly. There was no hint of the fire or anger from before. They all appeared to have become rather apathetic to everything.

Zhang Zuo asked, "How many people have not arrived yet?"

Wu Yi said, "Almost everyone is here. There's just one or two who aren't."

"Then let's get ready to start," Ha Qiqi said, expressionless.

Beside them, several heads of Central TV walked by for an inspection. They looked at the staff of Department 14. "So how's the preparation going?"

Zhang Zuo looked upset. "It's all done."

Deputy Station Head Zhou said, "When it's time for the Q&A session, don't mention anything about getting barred or the like, as it doesn't sound nice. Today's press conference is mainly to give a proper explanation to the people concerned about this issue. Don't bring up any unrelated things, understand?"

A different supervisor criticized, "In the future, don't commit such a big mistake! Even Zhang Ye knows how severe this is, yet you people are still not over it?"

The station heads then made their rounds once more, albeit not seriously, before leaving. With the footage deleted, there was no way they could broadcast it even if they wanted to. They did not believe this group of people could give them any more trouble.

Once the station heads left, the look on the faces of the Department 14 people turned even more unsightly!

A big mistake?

What big mistake did we commit?

Someone spoke up, "I think Director Zhang is still backstage. Can someone go and get him?"

No one answered.

Ha Qiqi just said, "Whoever wants to go, go."

Zhang Zuo sighed, "Old Ha."

Wu Yi gazed at Ha Qiqi. "It's actually hard for Director Zhang too. Director Zhang is tired of it this time and does not want to fight them anymore. We have to try to understand."

Ha Qiqi turned around and walked away to oversee the work elsewhere.

Tong Fu walked up. "But he personally promised Dandan!"

Zhang Zuo patted Tong Fu on the shoulder. "Little Tong, I know that you aren't in a good mood, but the implications of this business are too great and aren't things we can change. Director Zhang has difficulties as well."

Tong Fu said angrily, "He can ignore it, but why must he stop us from taking this into our own hands?"

Zhang Zuo sighed, "Hai."

Suddenly, a silhouette appeared at the entrance!

The people of Department 14 cried out in shock!

"Dandan!"

"Aiyo!"

"What are you doing here?"

"Why'd you come here instead of staying at the hospital?"

"Your surgery's soon!"

Tong Fu was stunned!

Ha Qiqi hurriedly ran over.

Huang Dandan said calmly, "I just came to take a look."

Ha Qiqi reprimanded, "The documentary has been axed, and Director Zhang's not going to do anything about it. What's there to look at? Go back quickly and get some rest!"

Tong Fu was also very anxious about her. "Huang Dandan!"

But Huang Dandan turned a deaf ear to them and stubbornly stood there without moving!

It was time!

The press conference was about to start!

Backstage.

There was only one solitary person here at this moment.

For the past few days, not a single person of Department 14 knew what Zhang Ye was doing. After he got suspended, he just stayed at home and did not show his face at the office. No one called Zhang Ye either. It seemed like the entire team had become strangers with him overnight. A lot of them were still angry at him.

Zhang Ye looked at his watch and lightly exhaled. He looked in the mirror and adjusted his shirt collar before he smiled and walked out satisfied and resolute!

I'm not a stern person, nor am I a likeable character. I'm not one to have an exhaustive plan, as I'm not a deep schemer. I don't know how to behave in a way that everyone will agree and be satisfied with. My EQ is not high and my IQ is just the same. I often make mistakes and am sometimes impulsive. I have many shortcomings, though I know them all!

You can doubt me!

You can scold me!

You can insult me!

You can bite me!

None of that matters to me!

But if you don't allow me to speak?

Then that is unacceptable!

That is...truly unacceptable!

Do you people think that by deleting the footage, you can seal my lips?

Do you people think that a documentary can only be shown on televised media?

Hur hur, then I guess you people have never before witnessed a documentary being broadcast live at the venue, right?

Chapter 967: Zhang Ye's Documentary on Air Pollution in China!

Thud.

The venue's door was closed by the staff.

This announced the start of the press conference!

The reporters roused themselves and looked at the stage. They looked around for the host of the press conference or Central TV Documentary Channel's supervisor.

"It's beginning!"

"Where's Zhang Ye?"

"Where is he?"

"Eh, why isn't anyone coming out?"

"Who's hosting the press conference?"

All of a sudden, the venue's lights went out!

Click!

Click!

Most of the lights turned off!

Only a few of the dim stage lights remained lit!

The venue instantly darkened!

"Huh?"

"What's going on?"

"Why did they turn off the lights?"

"What's the meaning of this?"

"Hey, what are you guys trying to do?"

The reporters were startled. Everyone started questioning Department 14's staff about this. This setup bewildered them as they had never attended a press conference that was held in this way. Why did they turn off the lights?

However, the employees of Department 14 were also startled by this. They did not understand what they were seeing. They hadn't received any prior notice and wondered how the press

conference could be held with the lights off.

Wu Yi quickly said, "It's probably a fault with the lighting system!"

"Quick, go and take a look!" Yan Tianfei's secretary was here as well.

Little Wang said, "B-But I don't think anyone's backstage?"

Someone else wondered, "The lighting was preprogrammed. I don't think there's a lighting technician around today?"

"What's going on then?"

Ha Qiqi sensed that something was wrong!

Zhang Zuo and the others also felt it!

The next moment, however, a vertical beam of light abruptly shot down from above and illuminated the rostrum on the stage. In the dusk of the venue, this light was quite conspicuous!

In an instant, the venue fell silent!

Everyone looked up at the stage in surprise!

From backstage, a silhouette slowly walked out.

One step.

Two steps.

Three steps.

"Sometimes, in the middle of the night, I turn on the light. I see the light shining and motes of dust, and sometimes even some irritating bugs flying toward the light."

The man's voice rang out before his face could be clearly seen.

Zhang Ye walked up to the rostrum. He did not gaze at the stunned faces of the hundred-odd media reporters in the audience. He just stared straight up at the beam of light as he walked toward it until he came to a stop in the center of it. "But there's something that I cannot see, the fine particulate matter floating in the air. It's smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter. It has a high refractive index which allows them to absorb a large amount of visible light, leaving us with a very low visibility of the places surrounding us. In time, people began giving this phenomenon a name, which I think is called 'smog.'" He smiled and reached out to grab something, but grabbed only air. "I've always been very curious about smog and wanted to know what it really was. It's right in front of me, yet I can't see it."

The venue was dead quiet!

No one could react to what was happening before their eyes!

This opening, this speech stunned everyone!

Ha Qiqi stared, eyes wide!

Zhang Zuo could feel goosebumps cover his body!

Huang Dandan excitedly balled her fists!

Little Wang's eyes reddened, tears threatening to spill out!

Director Zhang!

You...

Zhang Ye took two steps to reach an onstage master console that was set up beforehand and tapped on it. "There's only one way that I can drag it into my sight."

The big screen behind him lit up.

A picture of an apparatus appeared.

Zhang Ye smiled as he pointed at it. "This is a PM2.5 sampling

apparatus that I borrowed from the Environmental Sciences Department at Peking University. Professor Wang from their department told me that this instrument is extremely precious and that there are only ten of them in Peking University, so they couldn't loan it out. So I handed him a [68-yuan](#) bottle of wine and he immediately said that I could have the apparatus as a gift."

A female reporter in the audience burst into laughter!

A few other reporters couldn't hold in their laughter either.

Zhang Ye spread his hands and smiled as he said, "I've always thought that the smog was very mysterious and wouldn't show itself to just anyone. But later, I found that with an apparatus like this, which I exchanged for a bottle of wine, by placing a pristine sample of film in it, the smog would automatically show itself to me."

The screen flashed.

One by one, photos featuring scenes of Zhang Ye's daily life appeared.

There was a timestamp.

There was a location.

There was a figure of the PM2.5 values at that second.

Zhang Ye said, "This is from two days ago when I carried this apparatus around for 24 hours."

Two days ago?

So you did not come to work for the past few days because you were doing this?

At this moment, without exception, everyone from Department 14 looked deeply touched!

Ha Qiqi almost sobbed! Director Zhang!

Then, a shocking picture popped up!

The reporters gasped in shock!

"Ah?"

"This!"

"This is?"

Zhang Ye smiled. He pointed at the screen and said, "This was the sample of film that was taken out at the end of the day."

The film sample in the picture had turned completely black!

It was the same color as coal!

"Why is it like that?" a female reporter asked in disbelief!

"This...this is what the smog is?" A male reporter was also shocked!

One of the reporters nearly jumped up. "Impossible!"

Zhang Ye looked at him and said with a smile, "Yeah, I didn't believe it at the beginning either. However, I went to look for my Peking University colleague, who is still that Professor Wang from the Environmental Sciences Department, and gifted him yet another bottle of wine, and had him help me analyze the sample that I'd collected. I wanted to know what was really in it."

The picture changed.

A densely packed group of chemical names appeared!

Zhang Ye raised his hand and pointed at the screen. "These are the results of his analysis of the film sample. There are a total of 15 types of carcinogens, including the strongest carcinogen in the world, benzo[a]pyrene. Do you know how many times above the national standards it was measured at? It exceeded it by 14 times!"

It caused an uproar!

Carcinogens?

Exceeded the standards by 14 times?

Zhang Ye said, "I didn't believe it, so I carried the apparatus around and went out again yesterday to do another test. Then I hurried back to Peking University to look for Professor Wang and had him help me analyze the film sample again. This time, the result was...the benzo[a]pyrene levels exceeded the standards by 17 times! I was astounded. I thought my initial test was wrong, but how could the results of the second test exceed the standards by an even higher figure? Professor Wang said to me, 'Professor Zhang, did you go shopping this time?' I told him I did. Professor Wang replied, 'If you'd walked around a little longer, the result would have exceeded the standards by much more!'"

Everyone looked up at the stage in horror.

Zhang Ye shrugged. "I knew that Peking University had recently built a laboratory. As all of you know, since I'm part of Peking University, I'm in a relatively favorable position for some things. So I spoke to Professor Wang and asked if I could volunteer myself for the Key Laboratory of High Concentration Particulate Matter, and if they could measure my body for data so that I could better understand and inform the people of this. But Professor Wang shook his head and said that there was no way. So I asked why. I told them that I wasn't afraid of this. Signing a liability waiver was fine too. If anything happened to me afterwards, I would not hold them responsible for it, so just let me do it."

Everyone was rendered speechless. They didn't think that Zhang Ye would actually risk his life like this!

Continuing, Zhang Ye said helplessly, "Professor Wang hesitated for a long time before telling me, 'There's no need for you to go inside the Key Laboratory of High Concentration Particulate Matter. In fact, the outside air you breathe every day is much more polluted than the air inside the lab!'" Looking at everyone, Zhang Ye said, "It was at that moment that I realized all of us are actually living inside a lab that is constantly exposed. This is what the smog is, and that is who our enemy is. We can't see it, but it's all around us!"

Many of the reporters were aghast!

Many of them were also stunned by today's presentation!

Wasn't this a press conference? Weren't they going to explain why the documentary was taken down? Why did it become something like this? What was going on?

[Documentary?](#)

You're actually showing a goddamn live broadcast of the documentary?!

No one had seen anything like this before! These reporters had never even heard of something like this!

On the other side of the venue.

The emotions of the staff of Department 14 got a bit out of control!

Tong Fu wished he could slap his own face. "Director Zhang!"

Wu Yi said, "This..."

Little Wang wiped her tears away. "So it turns out that Director Zhang did this much in the past few days! And we didn't even know about it! We didn't know anything at all! I, I even spoke harshly to Director Zhang! I had thought, had thought that Director Zhang did not care about us anymore!" As Little Wang talked, her tears fell faster!

A staff member said, "Goddamn me!"

"I should have known!"

"Yeah! When has Director Zhang ever been afraid of trouble!"

"Why did he choose to do this by himself? Why didn't he tell us about it? He even told us to stop kicking up a fuss over it? And told us not to be involved anymore?"

Ha Qiqi's lips were trembling. "He was afraid that he would get us

into trouble! He intended to bear all of the criticism by himself! All of us...we have wronged Director Zhang!"

"Director Zhang!"

"I, I..."

If you're wondering why the wine costs 68 yuan, it's because 68 is a lucky number in Chinese, meaning something similar to 'good luck and a great future.

[Chai Jing's Documentary](#)

Chapter 968: A never-before-seen documentary!

This was an unprecedented press conference!

This was history's first live premiere of a documentary!

Zhang Ye calmly stood onstage and faced all the reporters who wore different expressions, his expression unchanging. "So how does the PM_{2.5} enter our bodies? How does it destroy our bodies from within? With the assistance from the experts at the Environmental Sciences Department of Peking University, we created a short video to explain."

The big screen lit up.

One after another, cartoon characters appeared onscreen.

"Hello, I am a PM_{2.5}. I have many siblings, such as the polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and various heavy metals, all of which carry a sharp weapon. In the game of attacking humanity, we very rarely lose. At the first stage, the nostrils, nasal hair, and nasal discharge stop foreign objects from entering. 90% of the particles that are larger than 10 microns in diameter will get stopped here, but that won't stop me. At the second stage, the throat in the upper respiratory tract has tiny hairs called cilia which beat in coordinated waves 20 times per second. But because of my lightness, the trachealis muscle—which contracts when irritated—will try to stop me, although that is not enough to defeat me. At the third stage, the lower respiratory tract has passages called

bronchi, which branch out like a big tree and conduct air into the lungs. This is our favorite ski slope of all, as we fight our way in against the cells, lymphocytes, and others. As a side effect, humans suffer from various inflammations caused by us."

This was an animation that they had prepared earlier to be used in the documentary.

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others were once again shocked!

The Central TV News Channel's reporter was also rather startled!

Weren't all these resources already deleted?

Didn't Central TV send a team of people to take them away?

Why do you still have it? H-How did you get them back?

Only then did the staff of Department 14 realize just how much Director Zhang had done behind their backs! Director Zhang had begun planning for this press conference since the day the documentary was barred!

"Our large force finally reaches the end of the branches of the bronchi, which is where the alveoli are. Humans have over 300 million alveoli in each lung. Once we block off these alveoli, they cannot breathe. But in here exists our most fearsome enemy—the macrophages. They are specialized to engulf and digest foreign substances, and are also known as internal scavengers. This is

going to be a tough battle. But we outnumber them, and our core is difficult to break down as well. Together with the heavy metal toxins, the macrophages find us hard to digest, so easily die. This is how the human immune system breaks down. We also have a group of warriors, the ultrafine particles measuring no more than 0.5 microns in diameter. They are able to penetrate right through the membrane of the alveoli into the bloodstream, damaging and constricting the blood vessels, which in turn causes increased blood pressure and leads to internal clotting. We can even make use of the pulmonary circulation to enter the core of the human body and carry out attacks against your heart, causing myocardial ischemic damage, arrhythmia, and heart attacks."

"Shiver in fear, human!"

"We're in every breath you take!"

The animation ended with the ringing of wild and savage laughter!

A lot of the reporters were holding their breath, too afraid to even breathe!

How could it be like this?

How can this be possible!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "While we were drawing up this animated short, a colleague of mine was present. She was

extremely scared. She told me that she has a two-year-old at home, and asked how this would affect her child in the future. I wondered the same, so I went to ask Peking University's Professor Wang about it. I said, 'Old Wang, shouldn't we expose our children to the smog so that they start adapting to it? Isn't there a saying going around these days? Don't make your kids lose at the starting line.'"

This made many of them want to laugh out loud.

But a lot of the people in the audience could not bring themselves to laugh.

Zhang Ye spread his hands. "Professor Wang told me that there was simply no basis for a statement like this. For every day that you're exposed to smog, it will be a day of damage done to your body. There's no such thing as adapting to it! So I asked him, 'What should we do, what can we do? And what about children?' Professor Wang hesitated for a while before giving me a suggestion. He said that we could only reduce the number of times that we went out on smoggy days." Looking at the reporters in the audience, Zhang Ye laughed and said, "I thought about that and felt that it wasn't such a bad idea after all. At worst, we could just stay home during smoggy days. That would surely do, right?"

That's right.

Just reduce the number of times you go out.

The reporters listened carefully and thought about it as well.

However, Zhang Ye spoke again. "Later, I realized that I had overthought things. I contacted our country's Ministry of Environmental Protection and obtained some internal statistics."

What statistics?

The reporters were taken aback.

Without warning, another short video started playing on the big screen!

The music played. It was a background track that sounded very heavy as a time lapse of images flashed on screen. It was the PM2.5 readings of various medium to large cities!

Shijiazhuang:

Days with air pollution in the past year: 267 days

Tianjin:

Days with air pollution in the past year: 189 days

Shenyang:

Days with air pollution in the past year: 192 days

Taiyuan:

Days with air pollution in the past year: 184 days

Chengdu:

Days with air pollution in the past year: 107 days

One by one, astonishing numbers appeared before the crowd's eyes!

The reporters were all stunned. How was this possible? Had the smog already reached such a state? But why didn't they know about it? Why couldn't they feel it in their daily life?

In this world, the people had a very limited understanding of what smog was. They really did not know what it was!

Zhang Ye pointed at the screen and gave a wry smile, saying, "In many of the cities, the number of days per year that the air was polluted on a large scale was close to 50%, and in some places, more than 50%. Don't go outside? Unless we don't work, don't go to school, don't go to the market, and don't go shopping, how else can we avoid going outside? When I got ahold of this data, I found it quite perplexing and was also extremely surprised by it. Why? Because I did not understand why it was like this. Wasn't smog only a thing that came up in the past two years? So why did it seem like the entire country was suddenly shrouded in it overnight?

Why didn't we have it in the past? Why didn't I know about it in the past?"

That's right!

There was no such thing as smog in the past!

Zhang Ye's words hit the bullseye. Everyone was thinking the same thing and could not understand it either. This smog seemed like it had suddenly dawned on them in the winter of two years past. There was no forewarning at all!

But Zhang Ye's next reveal made all the reporters at the venue gasp!

Zhang Ye said, "Professor Wang told me that the smog had always been around. But I said that was impossible. Was I blind or something? Why didn't I know about it before? Then, Professor Wang had me to go through some news articles from some years back."

On the big screen, an image from a newspaper was shown.

It was the front page news from ten years ago that appeared on the Beijing Times.

There was an airplane.

And heavy fog.

Zhang Ye said, "Professor Wang asked me, 'What do you see?' I said, 'Fog, right?' Professor Wang said, 'Have a look at the headlines of that day's news.'"

The image changed.

Some more words appeared over the top of that image. The news headlines was revealed!

"Massive delays at capital's airport due to fog!"

Fog?

It was fog?

The reporters were stunned. A chill originating from the bottom of their hearts spontaneously arose!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "In fact, since ten years ago, or even earlier, smog had already existed. But it was not referred to as smog at that time, but called...fog!"

The reporters were horrified!

Even the staff of Department 14 could feel a chill in their hearts

after hearing this. Actually, they were involved in the production of this documentary from the beginning and had conducted interviews at many places. They had created a lot of clips for the documentary and knew about all the things Zhang Ye was talking about. They already knew and understood the subject as they were the ones who'd handled it in the first place. But for some reason, when they saw Director Zhang standing onstage and relating the story, they still felt the same shock as the reporters. It was in truth even more shocking than when they first learned of all this knowledge!

This was Zhang Ye!

One of the top hosts in the domestic industry!

Organized, logical, controlled, appealing—he was just so good at all of it!

The Department 14 staff had full reason to believe that even if their original documentary were to be broadcast, the effects after the broadcast would definitely not be as good how Zhang Ye was currently giving his speech! This was on a completely different plane! This was an oration expected of one of the top hosts in the country!

It was extraordinarily charismatic!

"Lung cancer," Zhang Ye suddenly said. "These words can terrify anyone. I never expected something like this to happen to someone close to me." He smiled and said, "I've always thought that only us

smokers got lung cancer. But one day, I realized that I had it all wrong. I have a female colleague who's a year younger than me. She's the joy of our office and treats everyone very well. She's also very motivated, and does not smoke, drink, or have any family history of the disease. However, she was recently diagnosed with lung cancer. I got very angry at that time and questioned the doctor, 'Why! What'd she do to deserve that! Do you know how old she is?' The doctor said to me, 'I can only tell you that the lung cancer was the result of an unknown cause. But I formed an opinion that it was due to the air pollution'!"

Huang Dandan's tears fell.

Ha Qiqi held one of Huang Dandan's hand in hers.

Little Wang held Huang Dandan's other hand and cried together with her.

Air pollution?

Lung cancer?

The reporters were once again shocked!

This information that Zhang Ye had thrown out wrecked their perception of smog knowledge!

Zhang Ye looked at them. "Therefore, I wanted to investigate this. I needed to understand where the smog came from! I wanted

to find out who the responsible parties were!"

Coal!

Steel!

Pollution!

For the entire afternoon, without a script nor any assistance, Zhang Ye kept on talking about the subject.

...

Outside.

At a meeting room in Central TV.

The regular meeting had just ended and the heads gradually vacated the premises.

Oh right, is Department 14's press conference over yet?"

"Uh, I don't think so."

"It's still not over?"

"Uh-huh."

"It's already been over an hour!"

"I don't know."

"Why is it taking so long?"

...

At the venue.

A spinning Earth appeared on the screen.

Zhang Ye looked into the audience. "Thousands and thousands of babies are currently in their mothers' wombs or being birthed. These rivers, skies, and lands should belong to them. We have no right to consume without restraint. We have no right to grumble without restructuring. We have the responsibility to prove to them that a world illuminated by energy can be both clean and beautiful."

He faced the big screen.

Focused on that rotating Earth.

A smile hung on Zhang Ye's face. "Every time I see this planet

spinning in the dark of space, I feel a nameless attachment and warmth. Someday in the future, I'll leave this world, but my family and children will still be living on it, so I'll still be involved. That's why I watch over it, just like I watch over you. That's why I protect it, just like I protect you."

The music faded out slowly.

Further and further out.

The press conference was over.

Everyone sat in their seats, unable to move!

Suddenly, Ha Qiqi started to clap with all her might!

Little Wang clapped!

Zhang Zuo clapped!

Tong Fu clapped as hard as he could!

In an instant, a round of applause broke out!

Every one of the reporters present at the venue stood up, feeling a sense of shock, confusion, and fear...and gave their most respectful applause to this never-before-seen press conference!

This was Zhang Ye!

This was Department 14's new documentary!

Chapter 969: Stay true to yourself!

The lights came back on.

The doors opened.

The press conference ended and Zhang Ye walked off the stage.

But none of the reporters left!

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Teacher Zhang, please stay!"

"Please accept an interview!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Please wait a moment! Wait a moment!"

Numerous reporters piled forward in excitement. Several of the male reporters seated in the back rows even stepped over the chairs ahead of them to get to the front as everyone rushed forward in a frenzy!

However, Zhang Ye did not answer any questions or accept any interviews. He just turned around and left through the backstage.

Noticing this, the Department 14 staff in the back quickly went forward to hold off the reporters. They shouted, "Please go back. Everyone, please head back."

When a few of the reporters saw this jostling, they knew they would not get to interview Zhang Ye today. They were highly aware that something big was about to happen, so they immediately turned around to find their colleagues who were filming the press conference and ran outside with all their might, carrying their video cameras and cameras with them!

When some of the other reporters saw this, they came to their senses!

"Let's go!"

"Hurry, hurry, hurry!"

"Let's return to the station!"

"Quick, contact the editor-in-chief!"

"Drive the car over here first!"

This press conference, no, to be precise, this documentary was very astonishing, so they had to return to their office immediately to seek the opinions of their bosses. For breaking news of such

scale, it was impossible that it would remain a scoop. It all depended on their speed now as they competed to see who would get it published first and gain the advantage!

But even though they were fast, they would definitely not be faster than those from the Central TV News Channel. This was because they did not need to drive back to their office at all. It was just right upstairs!

As this documentary was ordered barred from broadcast by the Central TV heads a few days ago, the people of the Central TV News Channel clearly would not dare to act on their own. They quickly reported this matter to their superiors.

With that, the whole of Central TV was stunned!

Deputy Station Head Zhou pounded the table and jumped to his feet. "What? What did you say?"

Deputy Station Head Li stared and said, "C-Can you repeat that?"

The female reporter from the news channel said bitterly, "Zhang Ye has publicly released the documentary by presenting it in a live conference format! Th-This is the recording from the press conference."

They watched it as quickly as they could.

It was fast-forwarded.

And fast-forwarded again.

They took just five minutes to finish watching it!

The station heads immediately paled!

"What has gotten into Zhang Ye this time?"

"He's about to leave. Why is he still meddling?"

"This is pissing me off!"

"This is outrageous!"

"He actually had the courage to say all that with all those reporters around?"

"The documentary's footage was deleted. But he, he turned it into a live conference?"

"We cannot allow this to get broadcast!"

"This was a press conference held by Central TV! We'll be doomed if it gets broadcast!"

"Go and tell the Station Head!"

"Hurry!"

"Let the Station Head know! Tell him that something terrible has happened!"

...

Backstage.

The employees of Department 14 stood in front of Zhang Ye.

Huang Dandan looked at him. "Thank you, Director Zhang."

Zhang Ye smiled. "Since I promised you, I would've gotten it done even if the sky collapsed. There's no need to thank me for it. You must now recuperate and get ready for your surgery. I'll be waiting for you to get back and help me in the future."

"Director Zhang! I..." Tong Fu flushed.

Ha Qiqi said, "We thought that you were..."

Zhang Zuo said angrily, "Why didn't you let us know about something so important!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "It's just as you said. It's precisely because this is such an important matter that I knew I had to bear the responsibility on my own."

"We could have all borne it together!"

"That's right!"

"We could have all borne it together!"

"Why are you bearing this responsibility by yourself!"

"You're looking down on us, Director Zhang!"

Everyone had something to say, but they were in fact all very touched. Before the press conference, everyone had given up all hope and even entertained the thought of quitting. But when they saw Zhang Ye appear onstage and give his opening speech in such a composed manner, it set their pulses racing!

Director Zhang was still the same old Director Zhang!

He had never let them down before!

Zhang Ye looked at everyone around him. He spoke, "It's not that I'm looking down on you guys, it's just that it's not necessary to drag all of you down together with me. I've always been unpopular and have offended so many people, so I'm not really bothered by it."

But all of you are different. Every one of you still has a future in the industry, so why would I let you become notorious like me and get hated on? There's no need since we're a team. Haven't our roles always been clearly defined? You guys are responsible for producing the documentary while I handle the offending!"

Ha Qiqi said, "Director Zhang, I'm sorry. Back then, I even—"

"It's me who should be sorry," interrupted Zhang Ye, "as I didn't let you guys know about my plan. Actually, when I heard everyone saying that you wanted to make this documentary public even if you had to face the music, I felt rather touched and proud, knowing that you guys didn't disgrace me."

...

At a newspaper firm.

Everyone was up to their ears in work!

A lot of them were on the phone, while many of executives and employees of the newspaper firm had surrounded a monitor, which was replaying the footage from Central TV Department 14's press conference!

They finished watching it.

A reporter who was present at the press conference said, "Chief Editor, c-c-can this be published?"

Another reporter said, "Zhang Ye has revealed the source of our air pollution to be caused by the steel mills, gas stations, vehicle exhaust emissions, corporations polluting, and even coal-fired heating. I-If this gets published, wouldn't it cause chaos?"

Everyone was very uncertain about this and waited for the chief editor to speak.

A deputy editor said, "This can't be published, right?"

A different editor said, "So what if we know the source of the air pollution? Can we stop people from using heating? Can we ban all the steel mill production? Stop industrialization?"

An executive of the newspaper firm had a different view. "When did Zhang Ye say that he wanted to stop industrialization?" When did he say that he wanted to stop people from using heating? If coal-fired heating causes pollution, we can just aim to reduce the burning of coal and increase the proportion of gas heating instead! For pollution caused by steel mills, we can order the standardization of environmental protection facilities, increase crackdown efforts on offending corporations, and encourage citizens to report lawbreaking corporations! For pollution caused by vehicle exhaust emissions, we can increase the penalties. We can issue fines to all those heavy vehicles that exceed the limits! How is that called being unable to do anything about it?"

That deputy editor said, "But the citizens won't think of it that way! They will surely call for the complete eradication of steel

mills! And refuse large and heavy vehicles from entering into cities! The citizen are always ignorant. If they see this documentary, then—"

"Alright, everyone, stop arguing." The chief editor finally spoke up.

Everyone looked at him.

The chief editor laughed in extreme helplessness. "Honestly, I have gained a sudden sense of admiration for Zhang Ye. At least he dares to speak up and tell the truth. The whole truth and nothing but the truth!" After a short silence, the chief editor gave his orders. "Just report it. We'll publish it as is! Hand the recording over to Old Hu. I will personally write the rough draft for this afternoon's edition of the paper!"

"Chief Editor!"

"Why?"

"Are we really going to publish it?"

"Ah?"

The chief editor suddenly looked at them. "Why not? Why can't we publish it? Zhang Ye, as a host and documentary director, has done for us what we media personnel could not do. These kinds of reports should have been written by us in the first place; it

should've been us who exposed such news to the public. But look now, a documentary filmmaker has beaten us to it instead. Don't you guys think it disgraceful? Well, I find it disgraceful! I find it extremely disgraceful! I know the higher-ups probably won't approve of such reporting. But as journalists, we must sometimes have a backbone!"

Everyone went silent.

The chief editor said, "We should let the people know about this issue as they have the right to know!"

A female editor smiled. "The chief editor is right. I've finally understood why there are so many people who like Zhang Ye. He reminds us of our past selves every so often. There is a popular phrase going around these days: 'Stay true to yourself.' I suppose that Zhang Ye will never understand this phrase because everything he's said and done these past few years has been true to himself. He has never forgotten, but most of us have probably forgotten ourselves."

"Then let's publish it!"

"Fuck yeah, let's do it!"

"Right, you're speaking as if we're afraid of trouble!"

"I will contact Old Hu immediately and get him to publish the video in full on the newspapers' website!"

"Chief Editor, let me help you with the first draft!"

"Let's do it! Let the sky fall! Zhang Ye's there to hold it up!"

The entire newspaper firm immediately got down to work!

At the same time, the other newspaper firms and television stations were getting ready to publish the news!

Chapter 970: Let's clear up this day a bit, just a little

A video appeared online without any warning.

The headline read: Zhang Ye's Documentary on Air Pollution in China.

Another headline read: "Department 14's latest documentary."

And another headline read: "What exactly is smog?"

It just started popping up this way.

A lot of people were caught completely off guard!

"What?"

"The documentary?"

"Didn't it get banned?"

"Yeah, didn't Central TV ban it from being broadcast?"

"What's going on then?"

"Didn't they hold a press conference this morning to make an explanation about the ban? Then where did the documentary come from? This must be fake news, right? Is it clickbait? They're just trying to lure us into reading the reports, right?"

A lot of people did not believe the headlines as there has been too much fake news recently.

But many of them still could not hold back from clicking. And when they did, they were stunned!

"Damn!"

"Look! Quickly, look!"

"Look at what?"

"It's really true! This...this is Zhang Ye's new documentary!"

"How is that possible? It wasn't even broadcast on TV!"

"Go and take a look for yourself! It's not a documentary that was meant for television broadcast at all! The documentary was released live at the press conference instead! Oh my god! Teacher Zhang is too amazing!"

"Ah!"

"What?"

"Let me see, let me see!"

The first batch of viewers just kept on howling excitedly like that!

But when they finished watching the entire documentary that was filmed live at the press conference, which lasted over an hour, all of them got mad without exception. They could not believe it, as shock was written all over their faces!

"How is this possible!"

"Th-This is what smog is? These are the enemies that we've been facing on a daily basis?"

"This is too shocking! Too shocking!"

"This...this..."

"Share it! Hurry!"

"Right, we have to let everyone know about this!"

"Old He, quickly come and see this!"

"Old Wang, stop playing your games already. Have a look at this!"

"Motherfucker! This is too much! These polluting enterprises have really gone too far!"

"So that was why they banned it from broadcasting? Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!"

"Start sharing it!"

"Right, share it for Teacher Zhang!"

In the blink of an eye, the Internet blew up!

This documentary struck like a thunderbolt and lit up the Internet with a bang!

On Weibo.

"What's the matter?"

"What's happening?"

"What's everyone watching?"

"Why is everyone so excited? What happened?"

"Let me have a look too."

On the discussion forums.

"What is this video about? Why is getting so many views?"

"A documentary? Why did it get posted here? This is a stock trading forum."

"Holy shit! This documentary..."

"Heavens! Is this for real?"

"Is this what smog is? Fuck their grandpas!"

"So they've been keeping that from us all this time?!"

"Fuck! I want to swear at someone! I really want to swear at someone!"

On Tieba.

"Why didn't they tell us?"

"Why didn't they tell us before?"

"If I had known, I would have worn a face mask!"

"My wife died from lung cancer last year! Fuck!"

At a filming location.

A call from Fang Weihong suddenly came in. "Sister Zhang."

Zhang Yuanqi said pleasantly: "What's the matter?"

Fang Weihong said solemnly: "There's a video online that I think you should watch."

Zhang Yuanqi: "Hmm?"

Old Chen's house.

Chen Guang's face was one of shock. "This..."

Fan Wenli also looked somewhat pale. "This is the smog?"

Chen Guang said, "It has...already advanced to such a stage?"

Songstress Zhang Xia was at home watching this documentary. She watched it twice and fell silent.

At Beijing Television.

Dong Shanshan was stunned.

Hu Fei wore a sunken expression.

Hou Ge, Xiao Lu, and the others were all enraged!

At Yao Jiancai's house.

Yao Jiancai's wife gasped. "Why didn't anyone ever tell us about something so terrible? Why?"

Yao Jiancai gave a wry smile. "Little Zhang has ripped a great big hole in the sky this time!"

Yao Mi said, "Why do you say that it's ripping a hole in the sky? Teacher Zhang just reported the truth!"

Yao Jiancai said, "It's not like no one has investigated this before. There are also some people who know about this as well, so why must he go and spill the beans? This kid is an imbecile!"

His wife disagreed with him. "Yes, he is stupid. No one is more stupid than him in the entire entertainment industry! That time when Lee Anson pushed a fan after the Spring Festival Gala, if it were anyone else, they would not have bothered stepping in. But

Zhang Ye did! When Beijing Television's Wang Shuixin caused Father Wei's death, if it were anyone else, they would not have done anything. But Zhang Ye did! When the Japanese delegation visited Peking University and acted arrogantly, if it were anyone else, they would not have dared to say a word. But Zhang Ye did! He never had anything to gain out of any of that, and even caused many people to start scolding him! They've been scolding him from the year before last until last year, and then from last year again until this year. You said that he is an imbecile? I totally agree! He is the stupidest person I've ever seen in the entertainment industry. But, but deep down in my heart, I just can't help but admire and respect him! Do you know why I feel that way?"

Views of the online video were increasing rapidly!

Every refresh brought about an increase of a million views!

There were two video hosting sites that even crashed from the heavy load of traffic, leaving their entire site crippled!

This was an unprecedented kind of virality, as no other documentary had ever managed to create such a shocking and influential impact within an hour of its release! No, perhaps it wasn't just for documentaries. Even for movies, music, or videos, none of them had ever hit such a level of craze!

Central TV was angered!

The entertainment circle was stunned!

The entire country had been turned upside down due to this live documentary conference!

Confusion!

Panic!

Anger!

Madness!

All sorts of emotions were spreading rapidly among the people!

"@EnvironmentalProtectionMinistry Why didn't anyone take control of the pollution issues? Why?"

"Steel manufacturing corporations that have flouted the law, you all better own up!"

"Right, you all owe everyone an explanation today!"

"Who approved those heavy vehicles that failed the emissions tests and allowed them to be on the road?"

"Requesting that the relevant departments thoroughly investigate this! Why should we pay the price for your

irresponsibilities? What makes all of you think that you can profit off of our health? Teacher Zhang is right! You motherfuckers! What is that I smell in the air? It's not the smell of smog, it's the smell of the goddamned money from pollution!"

The populace exploded in anger!

An emotion rooted from the thoughts of getting deceived and having the truth withheld erupted!

"Where can we buy face masks?"

"They're available online!"

"Remember to buy the protective face masks that Teacher Zhang emphasized in the documentary. If it's just a normal cloth-type face mask, it won't be effective no matter how many layers it has. It won't work at all!"

"There's a private steel factory near my place that has broken the law. How do I report them?"

"Didn't Teacher Zhang already mention that?! Just report it to the police, as well as call the Ministry of Environmental Protection!"

"Right, let's report them all!"

"If one person is not enough to make a difference? Then are ten enough? If ten are not enough? Are 10,000 enough? Fuck, I doubt nobody won't care if so many of us report the violations!"

"Let's all take action together!"

"Motherfucker, we can't let them go about flouting the law any longer!"

"Smog! You motherfucker!"

"Corporations contributing to smog! You motherfuckers too!"

But at this moment, something happened that no one expected!

"Ah, I can't play the video anymore?"

"What do you mean you can't play the video anymore?"

"I can no longer load the documentary on dot net's site!"

"Damn! The video that was posted by the official website of Tianjin TV can't be played either!"

"It's been deleted!"

"It's the same for me. It says that the video has been taken down!"

"What happened?"

"Fuck!"

"Someone has made a move!"

"Zhang Ye's Documentary on Air Pollution in China has been taken down!"

Two hours after the incident started, the video was gradually deleted off the servers on a wide-scale. The reports by several mainstream media outlets regarding the documentary also disappeared suddenly!

The citizens were enraged!

Central TV Department 14's people also exploded with anger!

Ha Qiqi slammed the table. "How'd they take it down so quickly!"

"It's only been out for two hours!" Zhang Zuo said in anger.

Little Wang said, "They're totally bullying us!"

But Zhang Ye was not surprised. He just laughed it off and said, "Didn't we already expect that? Then what's the fuss about?"

Tong Fu anxiously said, "But a lot of the people have yet to watch it!"

...

The SARFT.

Wu Zeqing's office.

Bai Li hurriedly ran in. "Chief Wu, something really has happened! At the press conference held at Central TV, Zhang Ye..."

"I already know about that," Wu Zeqing said calmly.

It was at this time that Bai Li finally knew why Wu Zeqing had rushed back a day earlier during an important meeting at Shanghai. She understood now what Chief Wu meant when she said that something might happen today! It was Zhang Ye again! So it was over Zhang Ye's troublemaking again!

Why?

What was the relationship between Chief Wu and Zhang Ye?

Bai Li did not ask, and neither did she have the courage to ask. "That documentary's been taken completely offline!"

"On whose instructions?" Wu Zeqing looked at her.

Bai Li hesitated before saying, "It was the instructions of Deputy Chief Chen who is at the meeting in Shanghai. It seems like he received a call from the higher-ups and later gave the order directly to all the online video hosting sites and TV stations."

Wu Zeqing nodded. "I understand."

Bai Li said, "Chief Wu, ma'am..."

But Wu Zeqing did not say anything to her. Instead, she picked up the telephone on her desk.

...

10 minutes later.

The Internet was still in an uproar!

"How can they delete it?"

"I haven't even watched it yet!"

"Isn't this too much?!"

"Ah! It's back up!"

"What?"

"Yeah, the video is back online! We can watch it now!"

"Aiyo, it's been restored on dot net as well! The documentary is back online!"

"This is great!"

"Wh-What on earth is going on here?"

Everyone was confused!

The employees of Department 14 were overwhelmed by this surprise!

"It's been restored?"

"It really has been!"

"What happened?"

"Holy shit!"

"Who's helping us out?"

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others could not understand. How could they have any supporters?

Zhang Ye was also taken aback, but soon realized who it was. A warmth overcame him, and he momentarily felt rather apologetic. He would not ever regret what he had done today as he did not implicate Yan Tianfei nor his subordinates from Department 14. But there was someone who had been supporting him from behind and fighting alongside him! Zhang Ye did not wish to drag her down, but he knew that this was not going to be possible, so he felt quite sorry for her.

After he went back into his own office, Zhang Ye made a call.

"Old Wu," Zhang Ye greeted.

Wu Zeqing replied: "Mhm."

Zhang Ye hesitated for a moment. "It'll be fine if you can't make it work. Just leave it."

But Wu Zeqing smiled. "You've said it, and it has also been published, so how can we just leave it?"

"But for you..." Zhang Ye was afraid that she would be held responsible.

Wu Zeqing gently said: "Haven't the responsibilities between us always been very clear? You're in charge of the talking, while I'm in charge of letting you talk. Now that you've done your part, leave the rest of the battle to me."

When Zhang Ye heard this, he laughed. "Alright!"

Wu Zeqing said: "But I can only help you fend them off for at most a day."

"A day? That's good enough." Zhang Ye looked outside. He looked at the downcast sky outside and said: "We can only do so much anyway. Let's clear up this day a bit, just a little."

Chapter 971: Breaking 100 million views!

A call came in.

It was from Zhang Ye's former boss at Beijing Television, Hu Fei.

Hu Fei: "Little Zhang, you are way too ballsy!"

Zhang Ye laughed. "Not too bad, right?"

Hu Fei also laughed and said: "This time you've torn a hole in the sky!"

"This was exactly what I wanted," Zhang Ye said.

Hu Fei said: "I'm calling just to tell you that no matter what, your former colleagues at the BTV Arts Channel are all proud of you!"

Zhang Ye was surprised. "Thank everyone on my behalf."

But Hu Fei said: "It's us who should be thanking you this time."

...

On the Internet, the commotion was still ongoing!

"That's too frightening!"

"Is there anyone who has not watched it yet? Quickly share it with them!"

"Ah!"

"It's gone! It's gone again!"

"Damn, why was it deleted again?"

"What's going on? Didn't they restore the video just now?"

"Why did it get taken down again?"

"What are these people doing?"

"Ah, it's up again!"

"It's up again! It's up again!"

"Ah, it's gone again!"

"Ah, it's up again!"

...

At an online video hosting company.

In the general manager's office that was responsible for liaisons.

The phone kept ringing. Ring ring ring, ring ring ring.

Director Yan picked up the phone with a smile and said in a friendly tone: "Hello, Chief Wang....Yes, yes, yes....OK, OK, OK....You're very right, we'll take it down immediately....OK....OK....There won't be any problems....We'll handle it as the executives instruct."

The call ended.

Director Yan called his secretary over at once. "Quick, take down the documentary on air pollution!"

The secretary nodded and went to get it done.

A few minutes later, the phone rang again.

When Director Yan saw the caller ID, he quickly answered the call with a smiling face. "Hello, Division Head Sun....Yes, yes, yes....OK, OK, OK....You're very right, we'll immediately restore the video....OK....That's for sure....We must give our fullest support to public service documentaries!"

The call ended.

Director Yan called his secretary over again right away. "Quick, restore the documentary!"

The secretary grunted, "Yes."

Ten minutes later, yet another executive called!

Restore it back!

Take it down!

Restore it again!

Take it down again!

Finally, Director Yan was enraged!

Fuck your third uncle's grandma! This is fight between you gods!
Who have I offended to deserve this?!

Similar situations occurred at numerous online video hosting companies and other media outlets. Some people even turned off their cell phones and went into hiding. Some of them put on two faces, trying not to offend anyone. Some were so frightened by the situation that they simply feigned illness and checked into the

hospital!

At this moment, the industry was in a state of extreme shock!

A fight had started! The executives above them had started to fight!

The entire country was turned upside down all because of a documentary!

....

On the same day.

It was as though some people had discussed beforehand as they suddenly popped out of nowhere together!

A medical professor publicly issued a statement to condemn Zhang Ye. "Don't get deceived by Zhang Ye. He is completely misleading the public. He says that smog is related to lung cancer? That smog can cause lung cancer? Science has not shown any links, so what is he talking about?! Isn't that trying to deceive the people?!"

"Fuck off!"

"How much evidence has already indicated that there is a correlation between smog and lung cancer? How many

organizations have conducted research that show that smog is a possible cause of lung cancer? No scientific links? That's right! Indeed, there are no organizations that have successfully researched how smog causes lung cancer. But we're misled exactly by people like you! By simply saying that science has shown no links that smog causes lung cancer, what signals are you trying to send to the people? The first impression that everyone gets is that there is nothing harmful about smog! That smog definitely does not cause lung cancer! You all are tricking people!"

"Deceiving the people? The ones who are deceiving the people are the lot of you!"

"You people come forward to make a statement when we have yet to bother with you?"

"Idiots!"

The people were enraged!

Elsewhere.

A scientist from the Chinese Academy of Sciences fired shots publicly at Zhang Ye. "It's just scaremongering and complete nonsense! What's the point of saying all this? What motives do you have? Have you thought of the consequences? The air pollution is an inevitable product of human development. It is the price to pay for societal development. We must definitely govern it, but how do we do it? Are we really going to stop the steel mills from operating? Do the people really have to stop using heating? Are we

going to scrap all the cars? Do you want to revert back to a primitive society?"

Another scientist from an atmospheric pollution research facility posted: "@Zhang Ye Stop talking nonsense if you don't know anything. Governing and controlling the air pollution is not as simple as you think. There are many complicated issues behind it. Right now, I am seriously doubting the motives for Zhang Ye to create this documentary!"

A steel company's CEO posted on Weibo mockingly: "Zhang Ye is still driving his BMW X5, right? Get rid of your car first before talking to me about other things!"

The netizens were fuming!

Countless people immediately gathered around online!

"Get rid of his car? Why should he need to dump his car!?"

"What kind of fucking logic is that?"

"Based on what you said, people who are calling for charitable activities to be performed would have to donate their houses first, don't they? Are they all going to have to sell their houses away? So that they can devote themselves into a career of public welfare? Fuck!"

"Why are there idiots like you in society?"

"Let me tell you this! Teacher Zhang Ye is not a scientist. He is a documentary director and a host. Must he come up with a solution to solve the air pollution issue by himself? And he even has to find a way to do it so that everyone would accept it? Using the most proper way? Only then is he allowed to speak up? Only then can he announce the truth? Fuck you all! Isn't that what you experts and scientists must think of instead? Zhang Ye has shown the truth behind the smog to all of us. Even though what he can do is limited, he has already done his best to declare war against air pollution. What about you all? I would like to ask just what you people are doing! You people are unable to think of ways to govern the air pollution or come up with any research findings, so you started to scold him instead and nitpick? Fuck you!"

Thousands and thousands of criticisms came flooding in!

Several experts and scientists were instantly stunned from being scolded!

Immediately, another group of experts and academics came forward to cast their doubts on the documentary. They brought up claims of data fraud, baseless reports, and scaremongering. These accusations were all targeted at Zhang Ye!

But the next moment, they were drowned out by the criticism!

Their entire screen was filled with criticism!

Every time it refreshed, thousands more would come flooding in!

When someone jumped out to scold Zhang Ye, they would get scolded off!

When another jumped out to scold Zhang Ye, they would get scolded off too!

Zhang Ye's fans and even majority of the populace were all standing on Zhang Ye's side!

Zhang Ye was unlike Chai Jing from his previous world. There was no dispute about his nationality and his documentary did not involve any foreign organizations either. Moreover, for a Professional Korean Insulter like Zhang Ye and his case of chasing away the Japanese delegates with his scolding, to say that he was an [agent of some foreign powers](#) plotting to destroy China's development? They would probably not believe it themselves either! Zhang Ye's background was extremely clean; there was no disputing it! And most importantly, Zhang Ye's popularity was much higher than Chai Jing's in his previous world. He also had a much greater influence than her. Furthermore, the people of this world were basically uninformed about the smog, so even Zhang Ye had probably not expected them to give him their support with such little reservation!

The documentary was taken down again.

After a while, it was back up again!

The views on the video were soaring!

Five hours passed very quickly!

To the shock and horror of the industry insiders, the total views of Zhang Ye's Documentary on Air Pollution in China had already broken 100 million!

This was insane!

This was fucking insane!

"Carry out strict inspections on the offending corporations that cause pollution!"

"Hand over the murderers!"

"Who are the ones sacrificing our lives to make money?"

"We will not remain silent anymore!"

"Hand over the murderers!"

"Return us our white clouds!"

"Return us our blue skies!"

On this day, seven of the top ten Weibo hotly discussed topics were related to either Zhang Ye, the smog, or Department 14!

On this day, the [regional centers](#) of the Ministry of Environmental Protection from all over the country received a total of 110,000 calls and over a thousand complaints lodged by the populace against the organizations that had violated the emissions standards!

On this day, environmentalists and the people surrounded an organization that had issued fake emission level certification labels for heavy vehicles, which had violated the emission standards and was exposed by the documentary. After a full three hours, they witnessed the CEO of the organization and a group of people involved in the case getting taken away in police vehicles!

On this day, the people awakened.

On this day, a lot of things happened.

On this day, Zhang Ye raised his head up in the streets and felt that today's sky...seemed a little more blue than before!

[Chai Jing](#)

[Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People](#)

Chapter 972: Who in these lands don't appreciate you!

The next day.

At home.

Breakfast was ready.

Zhang Ye did not need to be woken up today. He had gotten up early by himself and washed up before coming out to the living room. When the steamed buns and millet congee was served, he immediately sat down at the table and started eating heartily.

"Mom, the congee tastes quite good!" Zhang Ye praised.

His mother was rather speechless. "Why do you sound like you're in a such a good mood?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "It's not too bad."

His mother stared at him and said, "But everyone says that you've gotten into big trouble this time!"

"I only spoke the truth, did what I wanted to, and did what I had to." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I have a clear conscience regarding it, so what do I have to be afraid of?"

"Well said!" When his father heard that, he nodded vigorously. "That's my son!"

His mother rolled her eyes. "What's so good about that? Just look at it." She picked up a dozen newspapers that she had bought just this morning and threw them onto the table. "That documentary of yours has caused chaos everywhere! Those corporations, the people from the relevant industries, and the experts, which of those people are not cursing at you now? With the way it's going, in another three to five years' time, everyone in the entire world will have been offended by you at least once!" Taking a breath, his mother continued, "But fortunately, your popularity still went up!"

On top of the pile of newspapers that were thrown onto the table, a bright red headline read, "Zhang Ye's Popularity Ranking Rises"!

During yesterday's midnight update of the latest Celebrity Rankings Index, Zhang Ye had used an unprecedented way of releasing his documentary to push himself off the bottom of the A-list Celebrity Rankings. In just one night, he rose up one place and even got within distance of the next spot above his new ranking. He was now getting closer to Jiang Hanwei, the martial arts star who had been popular since over a decade ago. He might not even be that far off anymore! Jiang Hanwei had taken over a decade to reach his current position. Including the time he took to get into the industry, he might have even taken 20 years or more! But what about Zhang Ye? He only took two years to get to where he was today!

What sort of notion was that?

This was something that had dumbfounded the entire entertainment circle!

In one night!

In just a single night!

Zhang Ye had gotten even more popular again!

From a certain perspective, Zhang Ye's Documentary on Air Pollution in China, which was released yesterday, had already greatly surpassed his previous documentary—A Bite of China—in terms of popularity and attention! Some industry insiders had given their evaluations about A Bite of China after it ended its broadcast run. They said that there would be no other documentary after A Bite of China that could surpass it, not even if it were another documentary made by Zhang Ye. However, in a short span of two months, Zhang Ye had used this new documentary to shock the industry and country again.

Could a documentary even be released this way?

Such a dogmatic public service documentary could even attract such topicality?

Every point that it raised was too shocking!

Every point that it raised was never seen before!

...

At Central TV.

Although Zhang Ye was suspended, he still came to work.

Compared to the sensation and controversy caused by the documentary, Zhang Ye's popularity ranking rise was no longer able to attract any attention. Today, everyone was still discussing that documentary. In their discussions, Zhang Ye's name kept coming up, as well as the name of Central TV.

"I really have to give it to him!"

"He even dares to publish that documentary without any scientific basis to back it up?"

"Zhang Ye's way of thinking is totally different from everyone else!"

"But the way he put it yesterday sounded so convincing. I was there at the press conference and listened to Teacher Zhang talk about the subject onstage. It really terrified me so much that I'm unable to describe that feeling. I guess this is probably what it means to be charismatic. He's really such a unique celebrity of the entertainment circle that I doubt there will ever be another like him! As of yesterday, I became Teacher Zhang's fan!"

"There are definitely some issues with what he has brought up. It's just not scientific at all."

"Then why are you still wearing a face mask today?"

"Uh, I was scared into doing so."

"And that is to Zhang Ye's credit!"

On his way to work today, Zhang Ye had a smile on his face. This was because he could see many people on the streets wearing face masks. He felt an indescribable feeling. Was it satisfaction? Or was it gratification? Zhang Ye just felt that his words had been effective in scaring the people awake, so perhaps that was the reason for the smile on his face. Even if he were to get more criticism, he believed it would be worth it.

Yan Tianfei also came to work today.

In the hallway outside Department 14, Zhang Ye and Yan Tianfei bumped into each other. When their eyes met, they both suddenly laughed out loud.

Yan Tianfei said, "I knew that you would not let me down, Teacher Little Zhang."

Zhang Ye said, "Thank you, Director Yan."

"You're welcome," Yan Tianfei said.

Zhang Ye said, "If it weren't for you, the management would not have allowed me to hold the press conference."

Yan Tianfei said cheerfully, "We've worked together for so long now. Do you think that I don't know what you're like? We have an unspoken understanding of each other."

Zhang Ye had earlier asked Ha Qiqi and the others to request for approval from the management regarding the press conference. The reason he wanted to hold it was because the people and media had their concerns about it, so he wanted to give a proper explanation to them. But that reason to hold the press conference was actually quite far-fetched, and since Zhang Ye and Central TV's relationship was in such a bad state, why would they allow him to do it? Why would they need to give him face? So this matter was actually handled by Yan Tianfei. It was he who helped Zhang Ye fight for the press conference to be held. That allowed Zhang Ye the chance to stand onstage and deliver the documentary! Before the press conference, in all of Central TV, perhaps only Yan Tianfei knew what Zhang Ye might be planning. Just as Old Yan had said, there existed an unspoken understanding between the two of them.

In the office.

The colleagues all gathered around.

Ha Qiqi said angrily, "Director Zhang, our documentary...was still deleted in the end!"

Zhang Zuo added, "A document was issued from above to affirm your contributions toward public service, but the reason for taking down the video was that it lacked proper scientific evidence."

Zhang Ye smiled. "Alright, I understand."

Little Wang hesitated for a moment before saying, "Will you...get into any trouble? The people you have offended this time are all people who have much at stake. They will..."

Zhang Ye said happily, "You make it sound like the people I have offended in the past were all just ordinary folk or something."

When he said that, Little Wang gasped, but also grinned.

This was Director Zhang. He would never let anything, no matter how big, bother him. He only cared about whether he could say what he wanted, but as for the consequences, he never considered them at all.

The tone of events was set!

It was set the moment the documentary was taken down!

How intense would this game get? How serious had the matter

become? What were the executives' attitudes toward it? What were the relevant departments' feelings about it? A lot of people still did not know as they could only get a glimpse into what was happening through the news reports. It was difficult to get an overall picture and discover the truth behind it. But there was one thing that everyone found out immediately, and that was the attitude of Central TV. A document released by Central TV caused a commotion once more!

On the same day.

Central TV had called for an emergency meeting.

After the meeting, Central TV made a decision and publicly indicated that they would disavow Zhang Ye's documentary due to its imprecision. They made it clear that the release had nothing to do with Central TV and that it was Zhang Ye's personal decision to do so. Finally, Central TV announced that they would terminate Zhang Ye's one-year contract with them with immediate effect!

In plain speech, he was fired!

Actually, Central TV was just afraid of trouble. They had truly been terrified by Zhang Ye and finally realized something. Freeze him? Ban him? Those actions were totally meaningless. As long as Zhang Ye remained in Central TV, this fellow could cause a million other problems for them. Furthermore, all those problems would be on an extremely shocking scale. Hold him back by keeping him with them? Fuck your grandpa! It's better that you just hurry up and leave! Every second that we keep you, we'll just be living in constant fear!

This lunatic!

This was the craziest guy of them all!

Right now, Central TV just did not wish to see Zhang Ye a moment longer!

But the netizens were enraged!

"What the hell?"

"Firing Teacher Zhang at a time like this?"

"Everyone knows that Teacher Zhang's contract is coming to an end and he will be leaving soon. But to fire him at this point in time? What's the meaning behind that?"

"They're such fucking bullies!"

"Fuck! What has Zhang Ye done to you guys?"

"Central TV's reaction is too extreme, isn't it? No one at the top has said anything yet, but you people already can't wait to draw a line between yourselves and Zhang Ye? Are you trying to place all the blame on him?"

"I could turn a blind eye when Central TV wanted to forcibly take away the copyrights of The Voice! I could turn a blind eye when Zhang Ye was frozen! When Central TV transferred Zhang Ye to the documentary channel? I could still turn a blind eye to that! But I'm unable to do so anymore this time! Teacher Zhang should be allowed to leave in a blaze of glory! He should be able to strut out of Central TV's gates with his chest held high! By doing this, you're making it look like Teacher Zhang has done something wrong! It's like you're painting him as a failure! What is this? What the hell is this?"

"Damn, I'll never tune into Central TV's channels anymore!"

The netizens' reactions were very strong!

It was the same for the people of Department 14!

"Director Zhang!"

"This...this..."

"How could they do this!"

"They did this on purpose!"

But only Zhang Ye did not seem angry. Instead, he looked rather happy. "I was going to leave anyway, but I was waiting for my contract to expire. It's great that it was terminated in advance, so it's time for this bro to quickly find another job!"

Ha Qiqi flatly said, "I'll quit too!"

Zhang Zuo said, "Me too!"

Little Wang shouted, "Let's all quit together!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Just continue working for now and wait for my message. If there're any good projects coming up, I'll contact everyone. At that time, we can whip up another storm and score another big one, haha!" With that, he turned around. "Alright, I'm off."

After he packed his things.

Zhang Ye leisurely walked out of the office.

Outside Central TV, group of reporters were already camping there as they'd received the news in advance.

"He's coming out!"

"Zhang Ye is coming out!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Were you fired?"

"What do you have to say regarding this incident?"

"I heard that you've already been banned?"

"A lot of the TV stations that contacted you before to join them after your contract ran out seem to have all withdrawn their offers now? There's no more news about it? Is it true that you have been banned again?"

"What are you planning to do for your next project?"

"If there's no job that comes knocking on your door, what will you do?"

"Teacher Zhang, what is your opinion of Central TV?"

"Do you feel very wronged over how things turned out?"

"The documentary has been taken down and you were fired by Central TV too. What would you like to say most at this moment?"

A lot of them were pointing their microphones and audio recorders at Zhang Ye while surrounding him and not letting him leave.

Zhang Ye knew that if he did not give them a response here, he wouldn't be able to leave. He turned around to look at the Central

TV Tower, then looked at the reporters with a smile. "Who told you guys that I feel wrong? Who said that I feel bad because of this?"

Today's weather was a little odd.

Clearly, spring had already arrived, but the skies were constantly downcast. There were even some snowflakes drifting down gently, and mixed among them was some rain falling from the sky.

It was snowing?

It felt like a farewell to Zhang Ye!

Zhang Ye smiled and suddenly thought of a poem from his previous world.

He looked at the reporters, then looked up at the gloomy sky that seemed to be starting to clear up. Zhang Ye softly opened his mouth.

"Vast snow clouds darken the skies.

"The blowing north winds drive the geese and snow.

"Worry not that close friends won't appear on the road ahead.

"Who in these lands don't appreciate you?"

This was Zhang Ye's current mood.

This was the poem he was gifting himself.

"[Sending off Dongda](#)" from his previous world had been changed to "Sending off Myself" by him!
Zhang Ye then swaggered away.

He left the group of reporters frozen in place!

Worry not that close friends won't be on the journey ahead!

Who in these lands...don't appreciate you?

Dongda - also known as Dong, the eldest, or Dong Tinglan. [The poem](#) is a [jueju](#), or Chinese quatrain.

Chapter 973: Zhang Ye's apartment gets wrecked!

Today.

Zhang Ye had officially departed from Central TV.

The poem he recited when he left had caused a sensation throughout the country!

When a video was released and the news reported about it, the netizens, who were enraged by Central TV's sacking of Zhang Ye just a moment ago, all started cheering for him in the next moment!

"That was so cool!"

"Yeah, Zhang Ye was really cool there!"

"Worry not that close friends won't appear on the road ahead? Who in these lands don't know about you?"

"How domineering! Teacher Zhang's brazenness just shot through the roof! Hahahahaha!"

"Right, this is Central TV's loss!"

"Those idiots! Where else can you find celebrities such as Zhang Ye!? How could there still be people so anxious to suppress him all the time? Freeze him? Fire him? I'm laughing so hard! What a useless bunch of idiots!"

"I really like this poem a lot!"

"Composing a poem when he departs from a job has become routine for Teacher Zhang."

"How charming!"

"This is who Zhang Ye is!"

"That's right, this is exactly who Zhang Ye is!"

"Teacher Zhang! There must be someone in this world who understands you. Who in the world could possibly not appreciate a person and celebrity such as you?"

"We are all your close friends!"

"Right, we all are!"

"Teacher Zhang, thank you!"

"Thank you, Zhang Ye, for letting us know the truth!"

"We all know how much you have sacrificed for the benefit of so many people! We all will remember everything that you did! We are not eloquent as you, so there are some things which we do not know how to properly say to you. But if you see this, I would like you to know that a lot of people have always been extremely grateful to you. You've helped and inspired a lot of people—we salute to you!"

"We salute to you!"

"We salute to you!"

"We salute to you!"

In an instant, Weibo was filled with these four words!

The "Salute to Zhang Ye" post on Weibo reached the front page and stayed firmly in the headlines. Numerous people followed up by posting their comments of "We salute to you" on Weibo as well!

This showed the people's gratitude for Zhang Ye!

Since they couldn't really do much for Zhang Ye, they could only express their gratitude to him.

Expressing gratitude might seem like a simple gesture. But at times, the weight behind it was immense!

...

At a newspaper firm.

This was the first newspaper firm that decided to publish the video of Zhang Ye's press conference and reported on it. At the time, they had a huge disagreement internally and there was an argument about the news for a long while. In the end, it was the chief editor who gave his approval to publish the news.

The editorial department had already seen that Weibo post.

The chief editor smiled at one of the editors and said, "Didn't you say that the people were all ignorant?"

That person looked slightly embarrassed.

The other people from the editorial department kept quiet as well.

The chief editor pointed at that Weibo post and said, "Just look at this. The people are actually not stupid at all. There's no need for others to tell them who has treated them well or done things for them. They all know it themselves."

A reporter sighed. "But Chief Editor, there are still some things that we cannot say without proper consideration, and not

everything should be told to the people. Like the example of the smog news this time. You have seen for yourself. The entire country is in disarray, the commotion online has blown up, and a lot of departments in the government offices had to call for an emergency meeting during the night. In the end, Department 14's documentary was still taken down. The people might know the truth now, but a lot of officials were dismissed and many businesses got shut down. Meanwhile, Zhang Ye had to take on all the pressure himself and got fired, and someone might even take revenge against him. His future is probably over and he still has to bear the criticism from his doubters. Tell me, did Zhang Ye win? I don't think he did. In fact, he has lost!"

The chief editor thought for a moment, then looked at that reporter. He smiled and said, "At least this time, the truth has won, hasn't it?"

When everyone in the editorial department heard that, they gave it some thought.

Yes.

At least the truth has won!

...

At a villa.

At Chen Guang and Fan Wenli's home.

Chen Guang thumped the table and praised, "This poem was written so well!"

Fan Wenli nodded. "But the trouble that Little Zhang has caused this time might only be beginning. The documentary has been taken down and he has departed from Central TV as well, so it looks like things ended, but it is actually far from finished. A lot of people are probably staying silent for now, but who knows when they'll jump out to attack Zhang Ye again."

Chen Guang said, "Hai, I'm actually very similar to Zhang Ye. I'm also very righteous and unafraid of trouble. But why am I not as popular as him?"

Unexpectedly, Fan Wenli's response stabbed into him like a knife.

Fan Wenli giggled and said, "Because you don't know how to compose poems."

Chen Guang could say nothing.

Fan Wenli smiled and said, "He was clearly fired from Central TV. But in the end, Little Zhang used a poem to announce his departure to the world and left coolly like a winner instead, making the entire country's people cheer for him. He is the only person in the entire entertainment industry who is so talented and has such charms. Can you even compare?"

Chen Guang coughed. "Forget it. I'll just stick to writing my new song."

...

At night.

At home.

The moment he opened the door when he reached home, his mother asked, "It's time for you to look for another job?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "You already know about it?"

"You don't say." His mother pointed at a stack of newspapers on the table and said, "I bought a newspaper by the by and there's news about you. You're still in the mood to compose a poem?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Wasn't leaving my job just a matter of time anyway? It's fine that they made it sooner."

His mother said, "I'm just afraid that it won't be easy for you to find another job now!"

"Never mind that. Things will eventually sort themselves out," Zhang Ye said indifferently.

His mother asked, "I also heard that there are people looking to take revenge on you?"

Zhang Ye shrugged. "Let them come! I'll be waiting!"

Having just said that, his cell phone started ringing.

Ring ring ring, ring ring ring. It turned out to be Chenchen's number. That little rascal had previously taken the latest model of a high-end phone from Zhang Ye and even made him buy her a SIM card afterwards.

Zhang Ye answered the call. "What's the matter?"

On the other end, Chenchen's voice sounded neither fast nor slow. "Zhang Ye, my aunt asked you to make a trip here."

Zhang Ye asked: "What for?"

Chenchen said: "Someone smashed the windows at your place."

Zhang Ye was startled. "Which place?"

Chenchen said: "The place where your junior martial sister is staying."

Only then did Zhang Ye manage to react. "What? Dammit! I'll be right there!"

The call ended.

His mother asked anxiously, "What happened?"

"It's nothing. I have to head out for a while!" Zhang Ye did not explain to his parents nor did he want to let them know. He quickly drove away and headed straight for Rao Aimin's place.

It was only a ten-minute drive.

When he arrived, police vehicles were already parked downstairs.

"Ah!"

"Little Zhang is back!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

"You're finally back!"

Many of the neighbors and residents who knew Zhang Ye from the time he lived here had gathered in the area and formed a crowd to catch a glimpse of what had happened. When they saw him,

chatter broke out.

Several of the policemen also looked at him.

An old policeman called out, "Teacher Zhang."

Zhang Ye walked over briskly. "Hi, what's going on here?"

The old policeman asked, "You are the resident of the apartment?"

Zhang Ye immediately said, "Yes, I rent the place."

A moment later, he spotted Rao Aimin and his freeloading junior martial sister, Yang Shu.

Zhang Ye shouted, "Are you alright?"

Yang Shu asked, "Who are you referring to?"

"You, of course," Zhang Ye said.

Yang Shu said, "Oh, I'm fine."

He was just glad that no one was hurt. Zhang Ye looked up and saw that both the windows at his rental apartment were completely shattered. It looked very serious!

Zhang Ye immediately cursed, "Fuck their grandpas!"

If it were any other public figures cursing and swearing openly in public, people would sure have taken videos of it and posted them online. It would definitely cause a heated discussion and some news too. But as it was Zhang Ye who did the cursing, the people around did not even have look surprised and just watched calmly. It would definitely be big news if it were any other celebrity who cursed, but since it was Zhang Ye? That would not even be news. Even if they sent videos of him cursing to the media outlets, no one would run a story on it.

The policeman tried to placate him. "Teacher Zhang, please don't worry. No one was hurt and there wasn't much monetary damage either. We have already caught the culprits and will investigate the matter properly!"

Zhang Ye was stunned. "You caught the culprits?"

"They are over there." The policeman pointed.

Zhang Ye noticed three young men being handcuffed and led into police vehicles by the cops. From what he remembered, very few people would stroll around the area at night. In addition, the neighborhood was not in an enclosed location. There were several exits and the security guards did not conduct 24-hour patrols either. The three of them could have easily ran off after smashing the windows, so how did they get caught?

Zhang Ye asked, "Were they caught by the neighbors of the neighborhood?"

The policeman gave him a strange look. "No."

A different young policeman gave an admirable look at a woman and said, "She was the one who caught them. When we arrived, two of the three criminals were already beaten unconscious and the other one laid on the ground, unable to get up."

He followed that gaze to Yang Shu.

Ah?

It was Yang Shu?

Zhang Ye was shocked. "You were walking around the neighborhood at the time?"

Yang Shu looked at him and said, "No, I was at home."

Zhang Ye said in surprise, "Then how did you catch them?"

Yang Shu pointed to the windows upstairs and said, "I was watching TV at home when the windows suddenly got smashed by someone. I looked out from upstairs and saw these three people trying to get away, so I jumped down and went after them."

When the people around them heard that, they were all floored!

What?

You jumped out from the windows?

Damn, how many floors is that!

Zhang Ye nearly vomited blood. "Do you not want to live anymore?"

Yang Shu explained, "There are those air conditioning units hanging out from the windows outside, so I used them to break my fall as I made my way down."

Rao Aimin shook her head repeatedly and said, "This junior martial sister of yours is really reckless!"

Yang Shu was puzzled and justified, "I had to catch them no matter what since they smashed Senior Bro's windows. Otherwise, how was I going to answer to him?"

Chenchen came over quietly and glanced at Yang Shu. "Are you dumb?"

Yang Shu stared at her. "You're the one who's dumb."

"You're definitely the dumb one!" Zhang Ye got angry. "They're just 2 fucking window panes. I can buy four of those with 50 RMB! Are you out of your mind? You actually jumped down from such a high place? What if you fell and broke your leg? Huh?"

But Yang Shu said stubbornly, "I would still catch them even if that happened! What gave them the right to smash your windows?"

Zhang Ye said, "You could have at least taken the stairs!"

Yang Shu gazed at him. "If I took the stairs, they would surely have gotten away."

Zhang Ye was exasperated by her.

Several policemen wryly smiled. One of them said, "Comrade, my dear...big sis, can you please act according to your abilities the next time you play hero? What you did just now was really too dangerous! Y-You're risking your life that way!"

Yang Shu replied, "But I was acting according to my abilities."

The police were speechless.

Hai, just what sort of person was this!

Teacher Zhang Ye was already a wondrous enough person, but

who could have thought that the resident in his apartment was also such a fucking wondrous person as well!

You're even brave enough to jump down from such a high floor?

And actually fucking did it too? And you're even fine after all that?

The criminals with bruised and swollen faces were sitting inside the police vehicle and crying silently. They had truly been dumbstruck today. They just thought of escaping after smashing the windows and that was exactly what they did that. But they never could have expected that at the next second, someone would actually jump out of the windows and catch up to them, even giving them a good beating. The three of them still looked like they had seen a ghost!

Chapter 974: Tang Bohu's "Deathbed Poem"

In the neighborhood.

The apprehended criminals started to shift the blame.

"Comrade Policeman! We've been wronged!"

"That woman started beating us up the moment she jumped down!"

"Yeah, see how badly she's beaten us up! Arrest her! Quickly arrest her!"

"Sh-She's such a bully!"

When these three people started protesting, before Yang Shu and the police could even react, the onlookers and neighbors used their spittle to drown the culprits! Some of these neighbors only arrived after Yang Shu had rounded up the criminals, but some of them had witnessed the entire scene unfold in front of them.

A grandma said, "Ptui!"

A grandpa said, "I saw you three little bastards throwing stones at Teacher Little Zhang's windows. My apartment is right below Little Zhang's place and one of the stones nearly even hit my apartment windows. How dare you all claim to be innocent? This

is what you three deserve! You deserved to get beaten up by this young lady! I'm an eyewitness to the entire situation! Comrade Policemen, it was they who did it! I saw it with my very own eyes! When that young lady jumped down from above, the three of them wanted to fight her. In the end, they were all taken down by her!"

"Right, I saw it too!"

"These sorts of people ought to be shot!"

"How awful!"

"Smashing Teacher Little Zhang's apartment windows? Why don't you three go to hell instead!"

"Yeah, Little Zhang is such a good person!"

"Arrest them! Lock them up for eight to ten years! Don't let them out!"

"They were definitely sent here to retaliate against Teacher Zhang!"

"That's right! Teacher Zhang has revealed too much of the truth this time in his air pollution documentary. Too many people have been offended!"

The crowd was in a frenzy as everyone pointed at those three

people and shouted at them!

The three criminals still protested.

Zhang Ye looked at the three of them who smashed and broke his apartment's windows, then sneered at them. He thought to himself that they should just be content with the outcome for now. Don't you three know who you bumped into? The person you encountered was a martial arts master who wasn't too far from achieving concealed power, and also the true successor to Taiji Fist. Oh, right! Perhaps you didn't know this, but even though this apartment was rented by me, the owner of the apartment is staying just across the hall. You were trying to wreck a martial arts grandmaster's property, so you should be counting your blessings for being able to sit there unscathed!

Zhang Ye walked up to them. "Not happy about it? Shall we have a chat then?"

The three criminals immediately wilted and dropped their tough act!

"Close the car door!"

"Quick, close the car door!"

The incidents involving Zhang Ye beating up people had been reported in the news on more than one occasion.

A few of the police officers hurriedly tried to stop him. "Teacher Zhang, don't lower yourself to their level. Please don't lower yourself to their level." He turned around to the person in the police vehicle and said, "Quickly, start the car. Get them out of here for now!"

The police car drove off but the crowd watching the commotion still did not disperse.

The police officers looked at Zhang Ye. "We questioned those three people just now, but they did not reveal anything at all. Teacher Zhang, can you try to remember if you have offended anyone? They clearly came here with a purpose since they already knew your address. This was a premeditated crime for sure, so we have to investigate their motives for carrying out the act."

Zhang Ye glanced at them, then said, "Who I have offended?"

"Yes, please let us know in detail." A cop had already taken out pen and paper to take down notes.

Zhang Ye simply nodded and said, "The Writers' Association, the literary world, the Redology world, the education world, the mathematics world, the calligraphy world, the crosstalk world, the Koreans, the Japanese, oh, and the entertainment circle, the scientific community, the steel making industry, and the coal industry. I have offended all of them before on the whole and probably some other industries that I can't remember right now."

The police officers wiped at their sweat.

The neighbors around them were amused. "Pfft!"

Actually, the police were just following protocol when they asked him that question, but when Zhang Ye answered them, they eventually remembered something that made them not know whether to laugh or cry. This was Zhang Ye they were talking about. He was the hooligan of the entertainment circle. Just listen to the way this fellow had chosen his words when asked about who he had ever offended. He did not answer by saying what people he had offended or offering up any specific names. The moment he opened his mouth to talk about it, all the different types of industries, communities, or circles got mentioned! Yes. This fellow had really offended way too many people. There were so many that not only could they not remember who, even Zhang Ye himself could hardly remember them. If there was really a need to come up with a list of people he had offended, they might not be able to complete the list even if they were given three days and nights. The amount of people he had offended would number in the millions, if not the tens of millions. Asking Zhang Ye such a question was meaningless in the first place!

An old cop coughed and asked, "Then, to put it another way, who have you offended lately?"

Zhang Ye gave it some thought and said, "Probably someone involved in the incident regarding the air pollution documentary, I guess."

The old cop acknowledged, "I understand."

After a while, the rest of the police left.

The neighbors around him cautioned Zhang Ye out of good intentions.

"Teacher Zhang, you must be careful."

"We will help you keep a lookout!"

"Right, just be careful for yourself. They might be trying to take revenge against you!"

"Those bastards!"

"You have really offended too many people this time!"

Zhang Ye smiled and gave a fist and palm salute to them. "Thank you everyone for your concern, thank you!"

Back upstairs.

Zhang Ye and the others came back upstairs to his rental apartment.

Yang Shu said unhappily, "Senior Bro, I didn't do anything wrong. Why did you criticize me?"

Rao Aimin signaled Zhang Ye with her eyes and gestured her chin at Yang Shu.

Chenchen looked at Yang Shu like she was looking at some fool.

But right now, Zhang Ye could not bear to scold her at all. He stood beside one of the broken windows and peered down. At this height, even he could not guarantee that he would not get injured. Although his martial arts were much better than Yang Shu's, he had never before jumped from such a height. He could not understand how it would feel to do that. Looking at his junior martial sister who he couldn't really take seriously, Zhang Ye felt quite touched at this moment. She might be a little rash, dumb, and foolish, but when she encountered trouble, she was still rather capable at handling it! Speaking of which, she and he had become fellow disciples for just a few days, but look at what she was already doing for him. She was not careless at all, as she'd rather jump down from a height to ensure that she could capture those three criminals and give Zhang Ye an explanation.

It was at this moment that Zhang Ye truly saw her as his junior martial sister!

Zhang Ye said, "I'm not criticizing you. I was just worried that you'd get into trouble. If something like this happens again, you must be more careful. Don't be rash anymore, understand?"

Yang Shu nodded when she heard him say that. "I understand."

Rao Aimin looked at him and said, "What is it? Is it really

connected to the air pollution documentary?"

"I'm quite sure it is," Zhang Ye said.

...

Such news was definitely not going to be containable.

Before long, the news was reporting on it and the Internet blew up again!

"What?"

"The windows of Zhang Ye's home were smashed?"

"Damn! Damn! Damn!"

"They're totally trying to provoke him!"

"No, it is definitely a warning, a threat!"

"Motherfucker, who the fuck is responsible for it?"

"Nobody knows. The police station is still carrying out their investigation. I heard that the people involved were hired by someone to cause trouble, but they didn't manage to find out who was behind it!"

"It's clearly connected to the air pollution documentary!"

"Those bastards! The retaliation has already started this soon?"

"Is Teacher Zhang alright?"

"I heard that he's fine. He wasn't around when it happened."

"The audacity of those people! Teacher Zhang, you must be very careful!"

At this moment, a rather popular Weibo user with the handle of BigV said: "@ZhangYe Be careful. I just heard from some friends about this and it seems like there's someone who has spread the word that they would be dealing with you soon. It might not only be a single person. I even heard that someone has explicitly said that you could start preparing your will in the meantime! I don't know how true that is, but just be careful anyway."

The netizens were getting anxious.

"Then what can be done?"

"Yeah, what can we do?"

"Can Teacher Zhang really handle this by himself?"

"Th-These people are way too lawless!"

"Prepare his will? Fuck!"

"Do you guys think that the rumors are true? If it is, the police better be informed!"

"Right, we need to quickly protect Teacher Zhang!"

At the apartment.

Zhang Ye's friends started calling him anxiously.

"Zhang'er, did your apartment get wrecked?"

"It was only a few window panes."

"Did you see what they said online? Someone spread the word that they would be dealing with you soon!"

"I haven't read that yet."

"Quickly go and have a look then!"

Zhang Ye went online and had a quick browse. He saw those

comments and simply laughed it off. He immediately posted: "You people want to deal with me? I'll be waiting."

Following that, he threw out yet another Weibo post that stunned the entire country!

A will?

Hur hur.

Zhang Ye typed coolly:

"Those born in this world must sometime retire.

"Why not return to the land o'th' expired?

"This world and the other are two the same.

"It's just wand'ring 'round in a foreign shire."

The world-famous poem by Tang Bohu from his world, "Deathbed Poem," was thrown out by Zhang Ye!

This was Zhang Ye's attitude to the threats!

It could be seen clearly from this poem!

"How awesome!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

"I give you a perfect score for this poemmmmmmmmm!"

"Why not return to the land o'th' expired? It's just wand'ring
'round in a foreign shire?"

How domineering!

How fucking cool!

Notes:

Thanks to hweirdo for the edit!

"Those born in this world must sometime retire.

(Those born shall die someday.)

"Why not return to the land o'th' expired?

(So what's the big deal with going to the afterlife?)

"This world and the other are two the same.

(The nether world is not that different from this world at all.)

"It's just wand'ring 'round in a foreign shire."

(It's just like exploring a foreign land.)

Chapter 975: Zhang Ye comes to the music industry?

A few days later.

Everything was back to normal.

The window panes at his rental apartment in Jiaomen were replaced. After the police had finished investigating, they connected it to an official and a few corporations. In the process, Lu Yuhu had intervened and helped to expedite the investigations after Rao Aimin called him. Afterwards, the involved personnel were all either taken away or locked up. In the following days, no one else came to seek revenge against Zhang Ye. They could have been waiting for the right opportunity, or perhaps it was the brazenness of the "Deathbed Poem" that shocked them into inaction, or it might even be due to the attention from the media and citizens regarding the case that made them take a backseat for now and not dare to get on the bad side of Zhang Ye at this sensitive time.

In any case, incidents as a result of the air pollution documentary gradually subsided.

No subject could be heatedly discussed forever.

The criticism lessened.

The controversy lessened.

The topicality dropped.

The news no longer reported on it.

Zhang Ye and that sensational Documentary on Air Pollution in China was not seen on the Weibo trending page anymore, while the video of the documentary's press conference also disappeared from the Internet. It was as if it had never existed before.

But a lot of people knew that even though the footage was gone, the legacy of Zhang Ye and his documentary would forever stay with the citizens. Everyone's environmental awareness and their attention to the smog could no longer be compared to before. Before going out on the streets every day, whether it was going to school or going to work, the first thing that a lot of people would do was to open their windows to have a look at the skies. They would check their cell phones for the day's PM2.5 index before deciding on how they would get to work, if they should go to the park, or whether to wear a face mask—all of this were a testament to Zhang Ye's legacy.

Some people might not feel grateful for Zhang Ye.

Some might even scold him.

But Zhang Ye did not care. To him, this outcome was good enough.

...

At home.

Zhang Ye was still living his daily life as normal. These days were the most relaxing he had had so far this year. He would go out for a jog after waking up, take a leisurely stroll in the neighborhood, and then come back home for breakfast. Sometimes when he felt like it, he would brew a pot of Da Hong Pao and enjoy the tea, watch television, go online, or water the plants. It couldn't get any more comfortable and relaxing than this. He was a free man right now without a job to hold him down, so of course he could do whatever he wanted.

While he was enjoying his freedom, his mother was having none of it.

His mother criticized, "Hurry up and find a job already."

"There's no rush." Zhang Ye lowered his head and sipped some tea, even smacking his lips in satisfaction.

His mother said, "It's no rush for you, but I'm worried."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "And why are you worried?"

His mother angrily took away the open Da Hong Pao tea box and locked it away in a drawer. She said in annoyance, "If you don't go back to work soon, whatever tea leaves we have left at home will

be used up by you! Do you know how much that cup of tea you're drinking costs? Do you?"

His father rolled his eyes.

Zhang Ye was floored. "Oh, so you're just worried about the tea leaves?"

His mother said, "Enough with the drinking and get back to working."

"Alright, alright, I know what to do," Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner.

Look for a job?

That was easier said than done!

The situation that Zhang Ye was currently facing was quite similar to the previous time, yet a little different. Back when Zhang Ye had been banned, it was just like now. No companies dared to hire him and no television stations dared to employ him either. But the circumstances now had one difference. The attitude that the entertainment circle adopted toward Zhang Ye was very strange and ambiguous. A lot of the television stations wished to have him in their ranks and a lot of films wanted to have him in their casts, but no one dared to take this risk because none of them could grasp how the higher-ups viewed Zhang Ye. At this moment, there was no clear indication from any of the agencies or officials

that they wanted to ban Zhang Ye. Even the SARFT did not say a word about it, yet Zhang Ye's documentary was taken down and the news about him was controlled. These actions could not help but convey a certain attitude that left even the entertainment industry unable to comprehend things, much less Zhang Ye himself. As a result, everyone just stuck to observing the situation for the moment.

Zhang Ye called Rao Aimin. As his agent, she was now basically in charge of all work affairs relating to him.

"Hello, Old Rao."

"What?"

"Has anyone contacted me about a job yet?"

"There's not a lot."

"Isn't that still a few then?"

"A TV station was looking for you to take a behind-the-scenes role, but will not allow you to get onscreen. Are you willing to take that job?"

"Why would I want to take that job!"

"An animated film wants you to voice act for them, and the

money is good too, though there's one requirement. If there are going to be any problems or if the higher-ups disagree with your participation in the film, they will get someone to replace you and only pay you 10% of the agreed pay. Do you want to take that job?"

"Take, my ass!"

"Therefore, there are no offers."

"It's only these two?"

"What did you think? There aren't even any businesses looking for you!"

"Damn, can I really be that unpopular?"

"You've torn a hole in the sky this time. Even if there are people cheering and saluting you, do you think that those people from the film companies and TV stations would be convinced? Do you think they're stupid? Right now, everyone is still trying to get a read on the ambiguous attitude from the higher-ups toward you."

After hanging up, Zhang Ye felt very helpless about the entire situation.

In the past, Zhang Ye had planned not to do documentaries anymore after leaving Central TV or take any hosting jobs in the interim. Having done so for such a long time, he was beginning to get tired of it. Besides, it would be difficult to continue progressing

as a host. From a purely popular point of view, he had already reached the pinnacle of his field. There would be limited developmental opportunities in it and the audiences probably preferred to see something new too, so Zhang Ye knew that he urgently needed to change. He wanted to try out something that he had never done in the past so that it could help him further his popularity. At the level of the A-listers, every step was filled with difficulty. If he were to solely rely on making shows and being a host, even if every one of the shows he hosted were extremely well-received, it wouldn't make much of a difference to his popularity. As the entertainment industry of this world was quite similar to his previous world, he knew that there wasn't a place for a host among the Heavenly Kings and Queens. That level was not a place that a host could just work hard towards, moreover, an average-looking celebrity like him?

He had a bigger goal. He knew that he couldn't stay in the same spot and rest on his laurels!

He needed a change.

But right now, more than needing to change, he needed to sustain himself first. If there wasn't even a single job looking for him to be a host, whatever talk of changing or breaking out would just be empty talk!

Ring, ring, ring.

It was a call from Xiaodong.

When Zhang Ye answered the call, he heard a few people laughing happily. It was likely that all three members of the famous idol group of the country, Spring Garden, were on the line.

Xiaodong said: "Teacher Zhang, thanks!"

Zhang Ye wondered: "For what?"

One of the other members of the group, Li Xiaoxian, said: "The demo of our new song has been released. It's the one that you wrote and composed for us, 'Super Star.' It was just released yesterday but has already been heard by over 10 million listeners! It's at least two times more listeners than our last album's title track!"

Amy giggled: "Heehee, the full version will be out in a few days."

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "Congratulations to you girls then."

Xiaodong took the phone. "Teacher Zhang, when the full version gets released, we might need you to record a short video to support us. It could be you offering us a congratulatory message or perhaps you talking about your inspiration when writing the song. You must help us when the time comes, OK?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said: "I can definitely do that for you girls, but I think it's best not to use my video clip to promote you. I'm in big trouble at the moment, so I don't want it to spill over to you."

Xiaodong asked in worry: "About your air pollution documentary, is it really that serious?"

Zhang Ye said: "I have yet to get a job offer still, so what do you think?"

Xiaodong squeaked: "Uh..."

Li Xiaoxian said: "If there's anything we can help you with, just let us know."

Zhang Ye replied: "No one can help me with this problem, hur hur. But I appreciate your kind thoughts."

Online.

Spring Garden's new song had attracted quite a good response!

"It sounds so nice!"

"Xiaodong is too cute!"

"I like Li Xiaoxian! She's so graceful!"

"The song is really good!"

"When will the full version be released! I can't wait anymore!"

"This song's melody is fantastic! Although there isn't any intension, it sounds really vibrant! It matches up great with the style of Spring Garden! Who wrote the song? Was it by their exclusive songwriter, Qi Hailong? It doesn't sound like it. This great a song does not sound like Qi Hailong's work!"

"Ah, it's Zhang Ye!"

"What Zhang Ye?"

"Lyricist and composer!"

"Damn, it was Zhang Ye who wrote the song for them?"

"How unexpected! Teacher Zhang doesn't usually write songs for just anyone. His songs are usually reserved and meant for people like the Heavenly Queen, Zhang Yuanqi! And he might not necessarily give her his songs either!"

"But this song doesn't sound like Teacher Zhang's style?"

"What kinds of styles do Teacher Zhang's works not cover? Haha!"

"True that. Zhang Ye is really a very awesome person!"

"I heard that Zhang Ye has not found a job yet?"

"I don't know. I haven't seen any news regarding him for a few days already."

"Hai, the incident with the air pollution documentary this time has really affected him greatly!"

"Hehe. Actually, with Zhang Ye's talent, he can think about getting into singing. What do you guys think of my suggestion? Shall we drag Teacher Zhang into the music industry!?"

"Your idea is good, but I think you're overthinking things."

"Pfft, with Zhang Ye's lousy voice, how do you reckon that he'll be able to sing?"

"But he still managed to get onto the Top Chinese Music Charts once."

"Wasn't that owing to the special circumstances of Beijing TV's Spring Festival Gala? That 'A Letter to Home' depended on its emotional factor, lyrics, and the crosstalk to gain a place on the charts. But if you really analyze Zhang Ye's singing and voice, that song is really impossible to listen to. Moreover, Teacher Zhang isn't really handsome either, so it's definitely a no-no."

"Yep. I can still accept a host with the looks of Teacher Zhang, but if he were to be a singer? I doubt that would work. The people won't accept it, that's for sure. And besides, Zhang Ye has always

been a comedic celebrity. Scolding others and talking nonsense are his trademarks. Can he stand on a stage quietly and finish singing a song? He definitely can't!"

"Stop talking about the impossible. Zhang Ye will never join the music industry as a singer."

"Haha, I was just tossing the idea around, that's all. Of course I know that Teacher Zhang won't come to the music industry as a singer!"

"But if Zhang Ye were to really come, the music industry would certainly become a very lively place!"

"Yeah! Wherever Teacher Zhang goes, trouble ensues! Everything that happened in the past can tell us one thing—no industry can stand up to Zhang Ye's antics!"

Just because of a new song by Spring Garden, the netizens were all happily conversing!

Chapter 976: A new job?

That afternoon.

Someone knocked on the door.

Dong Shanshan had come to visit and even brought some fruit and health supplements with her.

His mother beamed. "Hi, Shanshan, you've come?"

Dong Shanshan smiled and said, "Aunt, Uncle."

"Come in, come in." His father went to welcome her. "Why did you buy so many things again?"

His mother pretended to be unhappy and said, "I've told you before that you don't need buy anything when you come visit. Child, why are you always so polite to us? Come, come on in."

Dong Shanshan looked around, searching for someone. "Where's Zhang Ye?"

A voice came from the bathroom. "I'm sitting on the throne."

Dong Shanshan covered her nose and said, "Hurry up. I have something important to discuss with you."

"OK," came the reply from inside.

As the weather warmed, Dong Shanshan dressed prettier. She was wearing a long skirt today and had tied her hair back in a simple ponytail. Her black hair seemed to have been dyed, sporting brown highlights.

As the door was not closed, an old neighbor standing outside stuck her head in to have a look.

His mother blinked and said, "Third Sister?"

The woman said in pleasant surprise, "Aiyo, it's really Dong Shanshan!"

Dong Shanshan turned around and smiled to her. "Hello."

The woman came into the house uninvited. "I really like your show. Can I take a picture with you?" She took out her cell phone as she said this. "Old Zhang, take a picture for us."

His father smiled and said, "Sure."

Click! Click! The shutter sounded.

Zhang Ye came out of the bathroom and said in amusement, "Third Aunt, how come you haven't asked to take a picture with

me?"

The woman glanced at him. "I watched you grow up from a baby. So what's the point of taking a picture with you? I won't disturb you guys any longer. I'll be off now." She then clutched her cell phone and left in delight.

Dong Shanshan had gotten very popular now as more and more people knew about her, to the point that they could already identify her by name. Apparently, a big company had recently approached her for a major endorsement deal. Inside of one year, her value had increased severalfold. Although Zhang Ye was much more popular than her, his social ties were obviously not on the same level as hers. Dong Shanshan had a clean background with no scandals nor stains on her reputation. Every company would be willing to approach her, and she was the favorite of every television station that knew her, unlike Zhang Ye, whose reputation was stained and sullied and was an out-and-out troublemaker of the entertainment industry.

After chatting for a bit in the living room.

Zhang Ye led Dong Shanshan into his bedroom.

He closed the door and sat down on the chair, pulling out a chair for her as well. But Dong Shanshan did not sit down on it. She smoothed her skirt before sitting down on the end of the bed.

Zhang Ye asked, "You don't have work today?"

Dong Shanshan shrugged. "Don't you know that Do You Remember is going to be taken off the air soon?"

"Taken off the air?" Zhang Ye was stunned.

Dong Shanshan explained, "Last year, when The Voice came out, it propped up the market for singing shows. But the audience's demands also became higher along with that. Although Do You Remember and The Voice do not fall under the same category, it was inevitable that it'd be affected. Last month's viewership ratings of Do You Remember dropped again. Although it has maintained the standard of around 0.75% of the viewership ratings, the station still decided to stop broadcasting. Brother Hu and the program team staff also felt the same regarding the decision. Nobody wishes to be stagnant. They all hope to make a new show so that we may make a push. Who doesn't wish to get the number 1 spot in the nationwide viewership ratings at least once in their lifetime?"

"Number 1 spot in the nationwide viewership ratings?" Zhang Ye laughed and said, "That's no easy feat."

Dong Shanshan bluntly said, "That's why I'm looking for you."

Zhang Ye gave a wry smile and said, "You really think highly of me?"

"That's right." Dong Shanshan considered him. "We don't have the talent to achieve it, but you do. If you could even get the number 1 spot in the nationwide viewership ratings and trample

on all the variety shows with a documentary, who else should we look for but you? I'm here to invite you to make a comeback and offer you a job as well."

Zhang Ye narrowed his eyes. "Is this your station's intention as well?"

Dong Shanshan smiled. "Yes, so will you take the offer?"

Zhang Ye said honestly, "But I don't really feel like making another show."

"Then what are you going to do?" Dong Shanshan said, "You still haven't found a job yet, right? Can't you tell the industry's attitude toward you now? They're all trying to keep as far away from you as possible. From what I know, no TV stations are brave enough to accept you, the 'Mess,' since they're all afraid of trouble."

Zhang Ye asked curiously, "Then why do you guys have the courage to ask me?"

Dong Shanshan smiled and said, "You know our Station Head, don't you? The old lady said that when Beijing TV was faced with difficulties, it was you, Little Zhang, who buried the hatchet and came to turn things around. You stayed up day and night without sleep and came up with the Quit Smoking PSA. Now that you, Little Zhang, have met with some difficulties, there is no reason for us not to offer you some help—oh, those were her exact words." Then she said, "The Station Head is a very good person. She has actually always been meaning to invite you back to join us."

Zhang Ye went silent for a moment. "Thank her for me."

"You should thank her yourself. I'm not qualified enough to speak directly with the Station Head since I'm not as important as you." Dong Shanshan said, crossing her legs, "The management has said that if you agree to go back, you would be placed with the same old team of Brother Hu and the others to re-establish a program team for a singing show. But this time, we must make it a big affair. The funding will not be a problem, so long as you are handling it personally. They are willing to invest a lot of money into this. You'll assigned as the executive director and executive producer. As for the hosts, we can have a man and a woman, so we can finally team up and appear onscreen together this time."

Zhang Ye asked, "What if an order is issued for me to be banned?"

Dong Shanshan replied, "If you can't be the host, we'll invite you as our guest."

"What if I can't even be a guest?" Zhang Ye asked.

"We can give it a try first. If there's really no way out, we can talk about it again when the issue has died down. The show can be pushed back for a month or two. The higher-ups can't possibly keep their eyes on you forever, right? There'll surely be a day when things pass." Dong Shanshan then used the tip of her high heels to nudge Zhang Ye's slipper. "So how about it? Give it some consideration."

This was a huge help indeed. With no one in the industry daring to involve themselves in this, Beijing Television had actually stepped up and offered him a position? It was even a rather good position and they were willing to delay the show just to wait for him? Just from the intention of this alone, Zhang Ye had to accept it. This was undoubtedly a timely assistance for him and he knew that Beijing Television was definitely taking a huge risk on him!

However, it was difficult for Zhang Ye to change his mind once he had decided on something. He really did not want to be a host in the short term. However, if he was going to be the host or appear on camera, then it would be pointless for him to be the program's executive director. A behind-the-scenes job was obviously not possible to support the minimal exposure required of an A-list celebrity.

He considered for a few minutes.

Zhang Ye said, "Shanshan, thank Brother Hu and the Station Head for me. I think I'd rather not cause any trouble for you guys."

Dong Shanshan said, "You're really not going to join us?"

"Let's forget about me being the executive director and host. But I'm willing to help with the planning of the show." Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Don't worry. I'll accept the job as the producer. For you, Brother Hu and the Station Head, I'll definitely come up with a good show for everyone."

"Why don't you reconsider it?"

"There's no need to."

"You really do not want to team up with me as hosts?"

"That's not what I mean. It's just that I'm getting tired of being a host. I have to put on a cheery face every time I go onstage, and I don't even get to say what I really want to say. It's really getting meaningless, so I just want to have a change of scenery for a while."

"Then what will you do?"

"I don't know."

"Alright then, inform me immediately when you have found a new job."

"Why?"

"I would like to see who would be so bold as to employ you."

"Damn, listen to the way you're putting it."

"What? Isn't that so?"

Indeed.

Who would be so bold as to invite him to join them at such a time?

At present, it was very difficult for Zhang Ye to get an appearance onscreen as even any news related to him was being controlled and restricted. Though he was a big shot A-list celebrity, what was the point of hiring him if he was unable to appear onscreen?

Hai.

What should he do?

What could he do?

Chapter 977: King of Masked Singers attacks!

In the following two days, Zhang Ye kept thinking about what show he should make for Dong Shanshan and the others. He could easily list out many potential shows, but none were suitable once he gave it some serious thought.

They wanted a singing show, but it was impossible for Zhang Ye to bring out many of the most successful singing shows that he had. It wasn't that he was reluctant to use them, but that he wanted to keep them for his own use in the future. Although Zhang Ye did not plan to do any hosting work in the short term, it didn't mean that he would stop doing it forever. He would still get back into it and bring out those successful variety show one by one when the time came, so he needed to keep them for himself. As for the remaining second-tier singing shows, Zhang Ye found them to be unsuitable as well. He felt that he couldn't bring them out as it might lead to only average viewership ratings. If that were to happen, Zhang Ye wouldn't look good either, and he might also interfere with the plans of Dong Shanshan and Beijing Television.

This was tricky!

Which show should he use?

Zhang Ye was in a dilemma as he paced around the house.

His mother was getting annoyed. "You don't have a job, so why are you still thinking about other people's problems?"

"Since they came looking for me, I feel that I should give them some help." Zhang Ye said, "She's my classmate, and Beijing TV has been quite good to me too."

His mother asked, "What about your job then?"

"I'm still looking." Zhang Ye gave her a perfunctory answer.

His mother shook her head and said, "How many days has it been now? If you still don't appear onscreen soon, everyone will forget about you."

But his father said, "There's no rush. Things will eventually sort themselves out."

"You put it so lightly!" His mother stared and said, "How will things sort themselves out now? Everyone is pissed at my son after he offended that many people. How can it be sorted out? That lousy air pollution documentary would have been better off not made. His popularity might have soared, but his future is in shambles!"

His father frowned. "The air pollution documentary was made for the good of the future. Why should he not have done it?"

"Good of the future, my ass." His mother said in annoyance, "If it was for the good of the future, why is he still unable to get a good job right now? So what's good about it?"

Zhang Ye said, "Will the two of you knock it off? Don't worry about me. I know what I'm doing."

Back in his own room.

Zhang Ye was also actually feeling unsure about the situation.

Well, whatever. Let's play a lottery draw first and get a change of perspective. The air pollution documentary had given Zhang Ye a large amount of Reputation Points recently. He had gained another bout of Reputation Points after having spent it all during the National Martial Arts Conference and no longer had to worry about running low. Time for the lottery draw!

He brought up the game ring's virtual screen with great familiarity.

Should he play the Lottery Draw (One)?

Or the Lottery Draw (Two)?

Zhang Ye's mind was actually not on this. He just played the lottery draw to get a change of perspective. He wasn't really thinking much and simply tapped on the Lottery Draw (One) without even activating the Lucky Halo.

Purchase.

Begin.

The wheel began to spin.

Without looking, he instantly bought some additional stakes!

Total Additional Stakes: 500. He spent a total of 50 million on that. This was now considered small change to Zhang Ye. He was just playing the lottery draw for the sake of it.

It spun and spun.

The needle slowed.

Ba da. The needle stopped in the Stats Category region.

Zhang Ye was startled when he saw this. Please don't. Why is it this again? He had received the Fruit of Stamina, Fruit of Strength, and Fruit of Agility from the Stats Category during the National Martial Arts Conference and had already maxed out his stats of these three Fruits in the Lottery Draw (One). To level up further in those three stats, he would have to try to get the Lottery Draw (Two) versions of the Fruits. If he were to receive them again in the Lottery Draw (One), that would be as good as a waste since those Fruits wouldn't add any more stats for him. Even if he was just drawing for the sake of drawing this time, 50 million Reputation Points were still no small sum. If they went down the drain just like this, Zhang Ye would feel the pinch.

The Treasure Chests (Small) appeared!

Zhang Ye opened up the treasure chests in an uneasy mood!

[Fruit of Charm (Voice)] × 500: Permanently increases the player's voice's charm.

What?

Fruit of Charm?

Voice?

Zhang Ye remembered that he had gotten this item in a past lottery draw. The very first time he received it, it was several Fruits of Charm (Eyes). After that, he received several Fruits of Charm (Voice). Although he didn't eat many of them at that time and the effects were not that obvious, it was still somewhat effective.

He had received it again this time?

Eat! Eat! Eat!

Without another word, he just ate them!

One by one, he put the Fruits into his mouth!

Finally, Zhang Ye gave it a try and said something, "Ah, ha, wu."

As a result of that, even he himself jerked back a bit when he heard it. He could feel that his voice had clearly become quite different. The difference was even quite a big change. Although anyone who heard him talking would still know that it was Zhang Ye, his voice now included a rather magnetic tone. Compared to his previous dry and low voice, there was more depth and a greater three-dimensional feel to it! There seemed to be not much of a change, yet at the same time seemed like a huge change. So this was the effect of 500 Fruits of Charm?

How awesome!

This stuff is great!

Zhang Ye was a celebrity and charm was naturally a very important attribute for him. Furthermore, a host like him depended greatly on his speaking abilities! For something like that, having more of it would never be too much. According to the experience he had with the strength, stamina, agility variants of the Fruits, eating 1,000 Fruits should max out the stats?

Alright, then let's max it out!

Thinking of this, Zhang Ye simply activated the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) as he wanted to max out his stats using the Fruit of

Charm (Voice). He just wanted to do so in advance, upgrading whatever stats that he could since all of these were definitely of use and likely to be of help in the future.

The Lucky Halo was activated.

A bright, pulsating glow rippled outward!

-100,000!

-100,000!

His Reputation Points were quickly dropping.

Zhang Ye also quickly pressed the lottery draw and added 500 additional stakes to it!

The wheel started spinning!

The needle kept colliding against the wheel's pegs revolution after revolution!

Maybe the Lucky Halo went on strike today, or maybe it was normal circumstances. When the needle slowly came to a stop, it did not stop in the region of the Stats Category. Instead, it landed in the Skills Category!

What?

Zhang Ye gave a bitter smile and quickly deactivated the Lucky Halo.

Thinking about it, even though this Lucky Halo was the upgraded version, it could only fulfill whatever Zhang Ye's maximum luck potential was. It couldn't help him achieve whatever results he wanted just because he wanted something very badly! Or get something specific that he asked for! That would not be realistic and Zhang Ye knew that he had expected too much.

Ai, this lottery draw might just be a waste of Reputation Points after all.

500 Treasure Chests (Small) appeared.

Zhang Ye could do nothing but take a deep breath before opening them. However, when he saw the items inside, he was instantly stunned, unable to react and frozen in place.

[Singing Skill Experience Book] × 500: Enhances the player's singing technique.

Singing Skill?

Also known as singing technique?

Such a skill experience book actually existed?

1 book...

10 books...

100 books...

The 500 skill experience books were devoured by Zhang Ye. They dissolved into glowing light particles and the learning surged straight into Zhang Ye's brain!

First he received the Fruit of Charm (Voice)?

Then he received the Singing Skill Experience Books?

Fuck, where is this headed? Are you trying to make this bro become a singer?

Although he didn't max out his stats, it still wasn't a small sum with 500 of each item. This was absolutely enough to qualify him as a professional singer, wasn't it? He probably would not get to the level of Zhang Yuanqi, Chen Guang, or Fan Wenli, but it should be at least enough to bring him into the world of professional singers, right? Uh, although he wouldn't actually know for sure since he had not tested it out. This lottery result had really made Zhang Ye's jaw drop. He had just been playing the lottery for the hell of it, but who could have guessed that he would receive those two items?

Singing?

Become a singer?

Zhang Ye had entertained this thought before, but his singing had never been good, not as a child and not now. Although he didn't sound terrible, he had never practiced singing before either. Sometimes at home, he liked singing a little bit, but he knew that he didn't really sing well. As such, he had dismissed this thought.

But now?

What was the meaning of this?

This bro can finally become a singer too?

Just this thought alone was enough to excite Zhang Ye. Damn, why can't I sing? I've been a calligrapher, a mathematician, and even excelled as a crosstalk comedian and skit actor, so why can't I sing? Wasn't this a great chance to have a change of scenery like he wanted? Uh, but how should he cross over? No one dared to let him appear onscreen at this point in time! He had no team to produce a music album either! Even if he could produce one, would the higher-ups allow him to release the album? It was too uncertain, but based on the current atmosphere, it was highly unlikely! Although there was no clear indication of a ban, but by not allowing Zhang Ye to appear onscreen, that was essentially the industry's attitude on the matter. Someone in the higher-ups must have spread the word, but probably did not mention the word

"ban" due to fear of negative feedback and backlash by the citizens. But this was fundamentally no different from a ban—and that was the reason why Zhang Ye found himself in such circumstances that he couldn't even get a job!

Couldn't appear onscreen?

Couldn't make mentions of his name?

Couldn't release any new works? Well, no one could know that it was him at least?

Suddenly, Zhang Ye's eyes lit up!

I got it!

How could I have forgotten about that!

Zhang Ye suddenly remembered a show. After worrying over what show he would help Dong Shanshan and the others make and about his job situation, he finally thought of this show. He immediately felt himself brighten up. Alright, it shall be you!

That's right!

There was no other show more suitable than this!

Although Zhang Ye wasn't sure he could truly sing yet, this fellow had always done things without a second thought. He would just do something once he thought of it. He was someone who would execute things immediately!

He called Dong Shanshan right away.

The call connected.

On the other end, Dong Shanshan said: "Zhang'er, what's the matter?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "I've thought of the new show for you guys."

Dong Shanshan's ears perked up. "Oh? What is it about?" Then she hurriedly turned to her colleagues who were noisily talking around her and said, "Quiet down for a bit. Zhang'er has thought of something for our next show."

Hu Fei ran over. "I want to hear about it!"

Xiao Lu said excitedly, "That's great! We've been waiting for some time!"

Dafei said, "Switch to speakerphone, Sister Dong."

"Alright, I'll put it on speaker." Dong Shanshan switched the call

to speakerphone.

Hu Fei said: "Little Zhang, we've been waiting for your call for many days."

Everyone in the office quieted down.

They were all looking at Dong Shanshan's cell phone in extreme anticipation. This was because Zhang Ye was on the line. He was that legendary figure who used a documentary to sweep away the entire television show industry!

Zhang Ye said: "It is according to your requirements of a large-scale singing show that can fight for first in the viewership ratings."

Hu Fei took a breath and asked: "What's the show called?"

Zhang Ye smiled and replied: "We'll tentatively call it—King of Masked Singers!"

Chapter 978: The return of Zhang Ye!

The next day.

At Beijing Television.

In the program team office of Do You Remember.

Hu Fei, Dong Shanshan, Hou Ge, Hou Di, Dafei, Xiao Lu, and the rest of the program team were seated in the office. They looked up at Zhang Ye, busily writing on a blackboard that he had pulled over as he spoke bombastically.

Zhang Ye drew a picture on the blackboard. "The Do You Remember set can be reused, but we cannot scrimp on the funding for it. It still requires many changes, like the expansion of the stage. What we have right now is not going to work. We must change the overall atmosphere of the set to become darker as it is currently too bright. These changes won't be terribly difficult as it should be quite simple to implement them without requiring us to do too much work. Then, about the production budget for the show, this time we will need at least 100 million as the base amount!"

Everyone was dumbfounded.

"Ah?"

"100 million?"

"Do we need that much?"

Hu Fei was also very astonished by this figure and silently wiped at his sweat.

Their Beijing Television was not considered an elite station among the provincial television stations. Their viewership ratings were quite good, but not actually that high. That was the reason why their variety shows were more conservative as they did not have as much money as Central TV. As such, they had never been willing to put such a large sum of money into their productions. When they heard the proposed figure of 100 million, everyone became a little flustered.

Dafei asked, "Teacher Zhang, just what kind of show is this?"

"Yeah, King of Masked Singers? We don't really get it," Xiao Lu said.

Hu Fei added, "How would they be masked? Who would be masked?"

No such show had appeared in this world before, so everyone was confused by it.

But Zhang Ye had forgotten this detail. "OK, I didn't explain it clearly. Let me talk about the show's content first. The core of the show will be to invite some celebrities, singers, actors, or hosts—

perhaps even some athletes if necessary. The only requirement is that they must be well-known and can sing well. Then we get a designer to design some masks, headdresses, or costumes to cover up the faces and/or easily identifiable parts of these celebrities. We'll have them face off against each other on the same stage, with the winner not required to unveil themselves and moving on to the next round, while the loser can choose whether or not to take off their mask. As for how the specific elimination and advancement system works, I will explain in detail later. At the same time, we'll invite those heavyweights of the industry as judges and guests of the show. We can make them the guessing panel, where they'll give their reviews and try to guess the contestants' true identities!"

Everyone was once again dumbfounded!

A few newcomers on the program team were slack-jawed!

King of Masked Singers?

So that was what it meant to be masked?!

Zhang Ye said, "The selling point of the show is this: If these celebrities were standing onstage, we would know who they are. But if they have a mask on, and we can only hear their singing voices, we would have to guess their true identities while enjoying their singing. That's what makes it explosive!"

Hou Di swiftly brought up a problem. "But a lot of singers have very special and unique voices."

Zhang Ye replied, "We can ask them to slightly alter their way of singing, or to change their vocal placement a little, all of which can be easily achieved."

Hou Ge raised another issue. "But won't they be exposed the moment they speak?"

Zhang Ye laughed. "There are voice changers nowadays, which we can directly connect to the microphones. After the voice changer is in effect, even our own parents couldn't recognize our voices."

Hu Fei stood up agitatedly. "Celebrity face off? What if those singers who've been famous for a long time are concerned about losing to the newer singers? They might find it embarrassing and decide not to take part, no?"

"Use the appearance pay and tempt them. Besides, I just touched on that." Zhang Ye said, "The loser can choose to keep their mask on and just depart from the stage. As long as their identity stays hidden, as long as the internal team keeps it confidential, no one will find out who they are. Regarding this point, we'll need all of the staff to work together, but I suggest that only the director alone knows their true identity. We just won't tell anyone else. And make them wear their mask during the rehearsals and recording! We must not allow their identities to be exposed! If we allow that to happen, our show's selling point will lose its support! That is most definitely not acceptable!"

Zhang Ye's explanation was already enough to form the structure of the show!

Everyone listened in awe, looking at each other at times and seeing the surprise in each other's eyes!

A rookie gaped and asked, "In the past, singing shows have always had the structure of a talent show. We've always had amateurs taking to the stage to showcase themselves. But I have never, ever heard of celebrities taking to the same stage and competing against each other before. Th-This is too big a clash! No one has ever done something so excessive before! Would anyone really come and participate?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Don't worry about that."

Everyone gasped.

A celebrity face off? Compete on stage? Only Zhang Ye would dare to come up with something like that! This idea had probably not even crossed the minds of others before! No wonder it required 100 million RMB in production fees. How much would it cost just to invite those participants? Then there was still the stage setup and the guessing panel of industry insiders?

That would be too excessive!

Wouldn't he be going for broke this way?!

This would surely turn the music industry upside down!

A woman rookie said, "I-Is that really going to be alright?"

Dong Shanshan suddenly raised her head. "I think it will be good!"

Hu Fei suddenly slapped his thigh. "Good? This will be great!"

Instantly, many of the program team staff felt excited. Just imagining Zhang Ye's description of the show and stage was already making their blood course!

Whether it was creativity.

Whether it was the scale of the show.

Whether it was the competition format.

Whether it was the professionalism.

All of them were unheard of in a variety show in the history of television shows!

In the past, every show that Zhang Ye proposed could not be understood by others when they first heard the proposal, and they would always think that it would not work out. Like for Do You Remember. What was so good about a show that required people to remember the lyrics? Like for Zhang Ye's Talk Show, what in the world was a talk show anyway? Like for A Bite of China, what kind

of waves could a documentary set off? But as always, the results proved that Zhang Ye was right. His vision and knowledge were much greater than anyone else's. He was light-years ahead of the industry!

But today, when Zhang Ye brought up the King of Masked Singers show, almost no one doubted him. When they heard the summary of the show, they immediately knew that it was going to be spectacular!

Hu Fei was in a great mood. He laughed heartily and clapped Zhang Ye on the shoulder. "Sure enough, Teacher Little Zhang, we really needed you to take charge after all! You can come up with an idea for a show so easily. That's what makes you different from everyone else! Who else in the entire industry could have come up with a show like that? Just how does your mind work!"

Xiao Lu also exclaimed, "We can finally work alongside Teacher Zhang again!"

"With you back, we're all feeling very confident again!" Dafei went up and gave Zhang Ye a long-awaited bear hug. "We really missed you! Teacher Zhang, welcome home!"

Hou Ge went over. "Welcome home!"

Hou Di also gave him an emotional bear hug. "Teacher Zhang, we've waited for your return for a long time! Welcome home!"

Zhang Ye had gained his fame at Beijing Television, but was also driven away by Beijing Television. He had had his share of grudges, gratitude, and friends in this place. Too much had happened in these two years.

But now, Zhang Ye had returned.

He had returned and brought with him a television show that could possibly set the entire country alight.

Chapter 979: On fire even before the broadcast!

King of Masked Singers.

It did not exist in this world.

This was a world-class television show from Zhang Ye's previous world that was extremely successful and known throughout Asia. The original Korean version of the show swept the viewership ratings chart everywhere it was broadcast, unable to get dethroned by any other show. It could be said that this was one of the representative works among variety shows. However, even though mainland China's domestic broadcast version of King of Masked Singers did quite well in the viewership ratings and was very popular with the viewers too, it was still lacking quite a bit when compared to the original Korean version. It could be considered a show that didn't translate well from a particularly successful franchise, which was a pity.

Zhang Ye had analyzed the reasons for this, and the reasons were probably numerous.

For example, the competition format: The Korean version required their contestants to reveal their identities upon getting eliminated, while the winner of one episode's match would have to accept a challenge from a different singer the next episode, with the winner of the challenge taking the throne as the Masked King. There were a lot of differences in the details of the show. The Chinese version would have the winner of a competition reveal their identities and then retire from the overall competition until

the finals were held. In terms of the format, the Korean version was clearly more logical and interesting. Zhang Ye didn't know the motives behind the change in the Chinese version, but he deemed it a failure.

Another example was the masks: The Korean version went for full battle regalia, with the contestants covered from head to toe in a mask and costume. They were so well concealed that even if their own parents were standing in front of them, they would not be able to identify them. This undoubtedly increased the suspense of the identity and made it interesting by making it hard to guess their identity. Meanwhile, the Chinese version had masks that revealed too much of the contestants' features, while the costumes were designed with aesthetics as the priority. Some of the contestants would have their legs revealed, some would have their arms revealed, some would have their double chins seen. Their close friends in the industry would not even have to listen to their singing to know their true identity, yet they had to act like they didn't know and look like they were finding it difficult to guess who it really was. There was basically no point in designing it that way.

And then there was the issue of the number of eliminated contestants. Korea had many more artists, while the domestic market in China was unable to muster up enough due to various circumstances. They could not implement an elimination of all contestants other than the winner as there were not enough artists in the country who could sing well. Even if there were, not everyone would be available, and thus, the show's freshness was not as good as the Korean version. This was something that Zhang Ye had considered too.

Listing out all the pros and cons.

He made the necessary changes and went mainly with the Korean version of the show, while retaining some standout points of the Chinese version. After all, each country's situation was different and he couldn't just copy it wholesale without changes.

The amended changes were as follows:

1. The winner would not reveal their identity.
2. The losing contestant could choose whether to take off their mask.
3. The number of eliminated contestants needed to be increased, but would be adjusted based on the number of contestants.
4. The masks and costumes must conceal the entirety of the contestant.

These changes were something that Zhang Ye was trying out, but he was still very confident. For such a highly popular show from his previous world, he couldn't possibly give up on it just because the Chinese version was not produced too well. From the results of the Korean version of King of Masked Singers, this was definitely a variety show which had the potential to become popular in the entire country! The Korean version of King of Masked Singers even surpassed the viewership ratings of the Korean version of I Am a Singer! Just what kind of notion was that? And besides, even if the

Chinese version of King of Masked Singers wasn't produced too well, its viewership ratings were still very high. If there weren't any other world-class variety shows competing in the same time slot, the results would definitely have been even better! Even if a world-class variety show was produced badly, its results were definitely not something that any other normal variety shows could match. It would still be spectacular!

...

The program proposal was quickly submitted to the station.

The director of Beijing Television was shocked!

The station heads were also shocked!

The moment they read the proposal, many of the heads of Beijing Television felt extremely excited. They had not expected that after the era of The Voice, during which singing shows were done to death, someone could still come up with something as original as this. The station heads only felt more relieved when they found out that it was Zhang Ye who put forward this proposal. They gave wry smiles as they thought of how Zhang Ye was without a doubt the best guy in the TV show industry. It was probably only Zhang Ye who could surpass Zhang Ye!

The station immediately gave their approval!

The program proposal?

Approved!

100 million?

Approved!

They did all that without objection!

After the success of Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala, the ambitions of the station grew. There was only one request and expectation of this show: Take the nationwide viewership ratings' top spot!

Beijing Television had always come up short in the area of variety shows. Once upon a time, many years ago, disregarding the nationwide viewership ratings' top spot, the number of times they were ranked top in the daily viewership ratings could be counted on their fingers. And this was even due to those days having no other good shows scheduled. As for their results in the nationwide viewership ratings for variety shows? There was no way they could compare! There was simply no place for them in the top few spots!

But right now, today, Beijing Television was feeling full of confidence. Everyone could feel a sense of simmering strength. They could all feel a sense of surety deep down inside!

Because that person had returned!

Because that legendary host who used to be part of their station had finally returned!

...

Do You Remember's program team.

Hu Fei received the approval order and came back to the office.
"The management has approved it!"

"This is great!"

"They're really going to allocate us 100 million?"

"Holy shit!"

"This is the real deal now!"

"If we mess it up, we're going to be screwed!"

"Don't say such discouraging things! We have Teacher Zhang on our side!"

"True, true, true! We have Teacher Zhang around!"

Everyone was chattering excitedly. Every one of them here had, in fact, never been part of such a large-scale variety show before.

Who would be content with working very hard every day on a show that would not get famous? But anyone would be willing to make a hit! And today, that chance had arrived!

Zhang Ye said helplessly, "Please don't expect so much of me, everyone. I'm only here to help. Everyone needs to work hard on it together." He looked at Hu Fei and said, "Brother Hu, what are the expectations of the management?"

Hu Fei smiled and said, "Nationwide viewership ratings' top spot."

Zhang Ye nodded. "Which day do we broadcast on?"

"Feel free to choose."

"Time slot?"

"Feel free to decide."

Zhang Ye said, "Alright, I understand."

They could get however much funding they needed; they could ask for any day and time slot for broadcast as they wanted. Such treatment was unprecedented. Almost everything was given the green light!

Everyone knew that this was not due to the hard work that the

Do You Remember program team had put in for the past year. It was purely based on the reputation of Zhang Ye as the best television program director and producer in the industry!

Zhang Ye immediately started giving orders. "Let's hurry up and make full use of the time. If the show can begin earlier, then let's push it out earlier and not drag things out. Start publicizing the show and put up a front for now. But don't reveal the content of the show. We'll explain in detail when the production work is done, so as to prevent others from copying us. Dafei, take a few people with you and start identifying the suitable candidates. Then write up a list and invite them one by one. Remember to keep it secret!"

Dafei replied, "Roger!"

Zhang Ye looked at Hou Ge. "Hou Ge, there's a lot of work to be done for the stage setup, so I'll leave that to you. You must supervise it well and get the workers to quickly finish the task!"

Hou Ge thumped his chest. "Leave it to me. Don't worry!"

Zhang Ye said, "Shanshan."

Dong Shanshan smiled. "Here."

Zhang Ye said, "The host this time shall be you, and the style..."

Zhang Ye had a great presence. Wherever he stood, everyone

would listen and wait for their instructions. But suddenly, Zhang Ye froze midway as he was talking. He looked at everyone in embarrassment and said, "Eh, I don't think I'm the executive director this time."

Dong Shanshan was amused. "You've finally realized?"

Zhang Ye smiled sheepishly. "Hai, I was too used to it. I'm sorry about that, Brother Hu. You're the executive director, so I think it's better for you to delegate. I will just keep to my planning and not involve myself in other things."

But Hu Fei said, "Your delegation was pretty good. This show is yours and the experience you have in organizing a large-scale variety show is more than mine. You're still the most suitable candidate for the executive director position as well as the host...."

"I mentioned it to Shanshan already." Zhang Ye waved his hands and said, "I'll forgo the position of executive director since I'm involved in some trouble. It's probably a bigger mess than you guys think it is, so it's better not to have my name linked to the show's executive director role. Whether our show can successfully be allowed to broadcast is still a big question mark, so it's better to have it this way. I'll just handle the planning and earn a commission through the copyright. If there are any other matters that I can help with, I will definitely do so. However, I must definitely not take the role of executive director."

Everyone kept on persuading him.

But Zhang Ye did not agree and still rejected them.

First, he did not wish to cause any trouble for his old friends.

Second, he had something more important that he needed to do!

...

Before long, the news was released.

Some of it was purposely publicized by Beijing Television, while some was unintended. Afterwards, news of Zhang Ye's return to Beijing Television quickly gained wings!

"Someone saw Zhang Ye outside Beijing TV!"

"What?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Zhang Ye's going back to Beijing TV!"

"For real?"

"What do you mean for real? The news has already talked about it! Go and have a look for yourself!"

"Zhang Ye's new show lands on Beijing TV!"

"Sources say it will be a singing variety show!"

"Title yet to be decided, but production cost set for 100 million!"

"Zhang Ye to be executive producer of new show, but not executive director!"

"Beijing TV's new show to be fully produced by Zhang Ye. Dong Shanshan confirmed as show host!"

"Hahaha!"

"After so many days, Teacher Zhang's new show is finally coming!"

"Do You Remember is going to stop broadcasting? Teacher Shanshan's influence is really great. Even Zhang Ye has come to produce a show for her! Why don't I get to have such an awesome ex-classmate!"

"Support!"

"I'm anticipating this to death!"

"Why isn't Zhang Ye going to be the host!"

"I heard that it's because he's been banned from the industry! They won't allow him to be onscreen!"

"Just what kind of a singing show will it be? Please explain!"

"But singing shows are already overdone. What is there to look forward to? Could it be the second season of The Voice? That can't be, otherwise Zhang Ye himself would be the host, right?"

"An entirely new show?"

"As long as it's made by Zhang Ye, I must watch it!"

"Start broadcasting already! I can't wait any longer!"

"Yeah, the days without Zhang Ye in the variety show industry have been way too boring!"

It was bustling online!

A lot of people were making a racket and looking forward in anticipation!

King of Masked Singers was on fire even before the broadcast!

No, to be accurate, the audience did not even know what the show was about or what it was going to be titled, but the show was already on fire before the broadcast!

Why?

There was no reason why.

It was simply because this was Zhang Ye's new show, that's all.

Chapter 980: Stop pretending to be an oil worker, you!

A few days later.

At home.

Zhang Ye received a call from Chen Guang.

"Zhang'er, King of Masked Singers has invited me."

"I know. I was the one who recommended you."

"The show's content has been explained to me by the production team. It sounds really good. It's making my pulse race a bit. But I have some big concerns that are holding me back from joining."

"You can sing so well. What do you have to worry about?"

"Don't you know how many people are in the music industry? Those newcomers are all better than the last at singing. Their vocals are so good, so how can I not be worried?"

"They can even sing better than you?"

"If we're all going to be masked, then that might just be the case. Since we can't depend on our popularity and our looks, we'll purely

be pitting our singing skills. Besides, the choice of song plays a very important role too. Hai, but you don't know about singing, so I can't really explain it to you. Forget it. I think I need to mull this over. If I can't participate, I'm fine with being on the panel of guest judges. The production team has also given me that choice if I don't choose to participate in the actual competition."

"Sure. Give it some consideration then."

"Lemme ask you this. Will the show succeed?"

"This show is produced by me. Whatcha think?"

"Alright, I understand."

...

At Beijing Television.

The last episode of Do You Remember finished broadcasting. The actual recording was completed a week ago, and the Do You Remember program team was officially renamed to the King of Masked Singers program team today. It still consisted of the original team as its base, but over a dozen other employees were transferred from other departments to join them as well.

The King of Masked Singers program team officially began production work.

In the office space, each person was working without rest.

Hu Fei was making a call. A woman was on the other end of the line.

"Teacher Li, I am Beijing Television's Hu Fei."

"Yes, hello, Director Hu."

"Regarding what we discussed two days ago, have you made a decision yet?"

"I'm still thinking. I'm not ready to make a decision yet."

"If it's about the appearance fee, we can still increase it some more."

"Don't misunderstand. It's not about the appearance fee. I think this show is really good and personally I would like to join. But I'm afraid that the pressure would be too great on me, which is why I have some hesitation."

"With your talent, you definitely won't have a problem on this stage. You're the first celebrity I called because I've always loved your songs."

"Thank you, Director Hu. Then..."

"Come join us. We'll definitely keep your identity a secret!"

"Well...fine."

"Great. So it's decided?"

"Ai, I'm going to have to go all-out this time."

He hung up.

Hu Fei laughed loudly. "I got one!"

Dong Shanshan blinked. "That woman?"

"Right, it's that woman!" Hu Fei and she were speaking in riddles.

When a few of the rookies on the team heard this, their curiosity was piqued. But they didn't have the courage to ask who it was, although they knew that this woman was definitely someone extremely popular and a big shot from the expressions on Hu Fei's and Dong Shanshan's faces!

Dafei suddenly exclaimed from where he was, "Brother Hu, I reeled in one as well!"

Hu Fei hurriedly went over. "Who?"

"That actor," Dafei said mysteriously.

But Hu Fei seemingly understood and kept saying, "Good, good, good!"

Dafei said, "But it's only rumored that his singing is very good, as no one has actually heard him before. So I was a little worried and requested that he send us a demo."

Hu Fei nodded and said, "Right, if it were a professional singer, that wouldn't be necessary. But for celebrities from other industries, it's better to play it safe by asking for a sample of their singing. Otherwise, if we spend money inviting them and it turns out that they can't sing well, it wouldn't be too appropriate to replace them at that time. It'd also be too late to do so."

Dafei said, "Let's listen to it."

Hu Fei beckoned to everybody. "Come here, everyone. Let's listen to it together."

The program team staff all came over.

The audio clip, which was simply titled "demo," was played.

Right at the start, a melodious male voice drifted out.

"I once loved a woman.

"Her smile, ever so innocent.

"One day..."

Everyone was astonished!

"That was really good singing!"

"This is great!"

"Is this an actor? Isn't this just like how a professional singer would sing?"

"Who is this? Brother Fei, please tell us!"

"Yeah, you're making us so curious! Who is it?"

"I can't identify him by his voice at all!"

Dafei simply smiled knowingly. "That's classified."

Hu Fei approved, "It's confirmed! This teacher has made the grade!"

Dafei said, "Alright, I'll go and contact him immediately!"

Hu Fei reminded, "Remember to keep it a secret!"

"Understood!" Dafei promised.

One...

Five...

Eight...

The number of approved celebrities kept growing!

This greatly exceeded the expectations of the program team staff. They had initially thought that it would require a great deal of persuasion and talk to convince those celebrities to join. But as it turned out, when they explained the show's internal workings to the celebrities, a lot of them became very interested upon hearing how the show worked. There was even a veteran singer who hadn't appeared much in public for over ten years who agreed immediately when invited! The celebrities weren't dumb. For some shows that were destined to have very little viewership, they wouldn't join even if they were offered a lot of money for the appearance fee. But if they heard about a show they believed would get extremely popular throughout the country, even if the program team did not invite them, some of them would surely come looking for the program team instead. Even if the appearance fee was low, they would surely agree to join. And this King of

Masked Singers by Zhang Ye was clearly such a show!

"Brother Hu, I have a demo here for you to listen to."

"Coming."

"How is it?"

"This is good! This sounds really clean!"

"Then should I contact them?"

"Who is this?"

"A celebrity who came up through the ranks of a talent show."

"Go ahead!"

Suddenly, Dafei fell silent while holding a stack of papers of the recommended participants.

"What's the matter, Brother Fei?" a rookie named Han Qi asked.

Dafei asked curiously, "Who recommended this person? Why is there only a contact number on it? There's no name?"

Han Qi was one of the few staff members of the program team who had access to this recommendation list. "I don't know, it wasn't me." Turning to another colleague, she asked, "Brother Sun, did you put them in?"

Sun looked over the list. "It wasn't me."

Hu Fei also came over to have a look. "Give them a call and ask who it is. The people on this list are all celebrities and big shots."

So Dafei handed the paper to Han Qi. "I still have a lot to do here. You can handle it."

"OK." Han Qi got very excited. The chance to have direct contact with a celebrity could count toward her qualifications. She immediately called the number.

...

At home.

Ring, ring, ring.

Zhang Ye's other phone started ringing. This was the new cell phone he had gotten from the Central TV annual staff party's lucky draw. Just a few days ago, he had slotted in a new SIM card he had just bought.

Zhang Ye purposely disguised his voice and answered: "Hello."

"Hello, Teacher. How are you?" On the other end, Han Qi spoke with caution.

"Ah, I'm good."

"I'm calling from the King of Masked Singers' program team. Has anyone contacted you before this?" Han Qi somehow felt that this voice was very strange.

"Yes."

"Someone has already done that?"

"Yes."

"Apologies, but we don't seem to have a record of your name. May I know who you are, sir?"

"Just an ordinary person."

"Uh, what's y-your surname, sir?"

"It's confidential."

"How old are you this year, sir?"

"Not old."

"What's your occupation, sir?"

"I'm a worker."

"Ah! You're a worker?"

"Yes."

"Huh. Th-Then are you sure you were invited to participate on King of Masked Singers?"

"Yes."

"If you're not a professional singer, we require that you send us a sample of your singing. Can you provide us with that, sir? You can just send it to our email."

"Sure."

"Thank you very much."

"You're welcome."

The call ended just like that.

Zhang Ye smiled to himself. He wasn't purposely trying to keep it from Hu Fei and Dong Shanshan, but had to do so because he needed to participate anonymously.

A sample of his singing?

Was this a screening?

Then what song should he choose?

Zhang Ye hesitated for a bit, then chose a song at random to record his sample. He did not have any professional equipment at home and did not know how to play any instruments either, so he chose to sing a cappella for the recording. At most, he might need to do some post-processing to it, but he could do that at home anyway. As this was just a sample clip, there wasn't really a need to do any major fixes to the recording.

After clearing his throat, he began.

This was the first time Zhang Ye seriously tried to record his singing, so he felt rather diffident. But when he opened his mouth to sing, even he was taken aback by his own voice!

...

Back at Beijing Television.

The King of Masked Singers' program team.

Han Qi said in a speechless manner, "Who could have recommended him? Why did someone contact him?"

"Did you find out who it was?" Hu Fei looked over.

"He wouldn't say!" Han Qi said angrily.

Dafei was surprised. "Wouldn't say?"

Han Qi said, "He didn't want to reveal anything at all. When I asked him what his profession was, he actually told me that he was a worker!"

"Pffffft!" Xiao Lu, who was drinking some water, did a spit-take. "A worker?"

Hu Fei didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "The names on this list are all big shots. How can there be any ordinary workers on it? Was he just teasing you?"

Han Qi said angrily, "That man was so awful. He spoke in a strange, gravelly voice, like he was afraid that someone would recognize him. It's like he thinks he really is some big shot or something."

Hou Di pondered this for a moment. "If he really did try to disguise his voice while talking, then he might really be a big shot. Perhaps he might actually get recognized easily if he speaks in his natural voice?"

"Ah?" Han Qi was startled. "Are you sure?"

Xiao Lu was cramping up from laughing. "Would a big shot call themselves a worker? This is clearly a prank on our Little Han! Hahahaha, I'm dying of laughter!"

Han Qi started blushing and became even more angry. "I asked him to send us a demo. I want to hear for myself just what kind of a worker he really is!"

A rookie suddenly said, "Oh, an email just arrived? Is it this one?"

Han Qi quickly ran over and pointed at the screen while gnashing her teeth. "Yes, yes, yes, it's him!"

Hu Fei laughed and said, "Come, let's all have a listen."

Dafei was getting very curious. "I really want to find out who this could be."

"I wanna listen to it too." Xiao Lu scrambled over as well. "Heehee, which big shot is so playful that he's willing to tease our

rook?"

Han Qi's face was getting hot. "Sister Lu, please don't ridicule me."

Xiao Lu said, "Sure, sure, sure. Big Sis will help you denounce him. Will that do?"

"Yeah!" Han Qi replied.

Having encountered such a weird person!

Everyone in the program team came over in delight upon hearing about this amusing incident.

The rookie clicked on the email attachment and started playing the recording.

There was no melody.

There were no instrumentals.

Everyone was surprised. Was it a cappella?

However, when the singing started, everyone was shocked by the vocal weight and technique. As the tune played, Xiao Lu got the goosebumps!

"Land as pretty as a picture!

"Our native land built on the backs of steeds!"

It was bel canto! But the voice was magnetic and sounded very young! What song was this? An oldie? But it couldn't be. Otherwise, why hadn't they heard of it before? Was it an original?

Damn!

Who was it?

Which famous person of the music industry was this?

The timbre of some singers' voices was recognizable right at the first word they sang. Although this man seemed to be purposely disguising his voice, those seasoned vocals could not be concealed! Everyone in the program team had already heard quite a few demos submitted by the celebrities and professional singers. But they had to admit that this unknown big shot's singing that was playing right now was definitely one of the best they had heard today!

The vocals.

The technique.

The control.

All of them were at the professional level!

A lot of them were drawn into the singing as they listened!

Hu Fei exclaimed, "Who is this!"

Dafei shouted, "Damn!"

Xiao Lu said, "This is a heavyweight contestant!"

Han Qi stood there dumbfounded, slack-jawed. She didn't expect this tight-lipped celebrity she was just on the phone with to actually sing this well!

Following this, however, everyone was floored!

The lyrics this man sang next made everyone feel like they were going to vomit blood!

"Land as pretty as a picture!

"Our native land built on the backs of steeds!

"How glorious it is to be an oil worker!

"Wearin' a hard hat and trav'lin' the world!"

Pfft!

Pfft!

Pfft!

Everyone in the office burst out laughing!

"Snow from Tianshan falls overhead!

"Facing the Gobi's desert storms!

"Greeting the rising sun on the banks of the Jialing River!

"Sending off the sunset at the foot of the Kunlun Mountains!

"Fearing nothing!

"And no one!

"Let it thunder and snow!

"I offer oil to my homeland!

"Wherever the oil is, that is where my home shall be!"

Han Qi's legs wobbled!

Offering oil to the homeland?

I'll offer your little sister's oil!

"Fluttering red flags welcome rosy clouds!

"Heroes whip their horses of war along!

"How glorious it is to be an oil worker!

"Wearin' a hard hat and trav'lin' the world!

"Erecting oil rigs in the vast grasslands!

"Bottom of clouds cover the wells!

"Underground crude oil meets the sky!

"My native land blooms with the gift of oil!

"Fearing nothing!

"And no one!

"Looking over the world with our great ambition!

"I offer oil to my homeland!

"With oil for my homeland, my heart blooms happily!"

The song ended.

The demo finished playing.

Everyone in the office was looking at each other!

Suddenly, Hou Di slapped his thigh and collapsed onto the table, belly laughing. "Hahahahaha hahahaha!" He was sprawled out on the table, unable to get up!

Dafei burst into laughter!

Xiao Lu was crying with laughter. "Aiyo!"

Only Han Qi looked embarrassed. She nearly burst into tears!

Hu Fei couldn't help but pat Han Qi on the shoulder. "It's been confirmed. You were the victim of a joke."

Han Qi was angered to tears. "Brother Hu—"

"Hahahaha!" Hu Fei couldn't hold it in any longer and started laughing too.

A worker?

You're a worker?

Bull fucking shit!

As a big shot celebrity and a professional singer with such good singing, why on earth are you pretending to be an oil worker!

You even offer oil to the homeland?

Why don't you dig some coal for your homeland instead!

At this moment, everyone had determined the nature of this voice's owner!

Just look at the other invited participants! Which one of them were not taking this competition seriously? Which of the

interested participants of their show did not send in a serious sample of their singing that would exhibit their best points? But this guy? Not only did he not give his name, he even claimed that he was a worker? He even made up some song about offering oil to the homeland? Most importantly, he still fucking sang with such excellence?

This was an old pro!

This fellow was definitely a seasoned pro of the industry!

But who could it be?

Why couldn't they figure it out from his singing?

Dafei said, "Brother Hu, what do we do about this person?"

Tears streaming down her face, Han Qi said, "Must we invite him?"

"What reason is there to not invite someone who can sing with such skill?" Hu Fei said with excitement, "No matter who recommended him and whether or not he wants to reveal his identity, this man...must definitely be invited onto the show!"

Han Qi groaned, "Ugh."

Dafei nodded. "Alright, understood!"

Han Qi spoke hesitantly, "Brother Fei, I..."

Dafei made a decision and said with a snigger, "Little Han, you'll be in charge of contacting this guy. We'll leave it to you to call him, notify him, and take care of his costume from now on."

Han Qi said tearfully, "Brother Fei, can you not?"

"Hahaha, you can consider this to be part of your training!" Dafei said, "Usually, someone who's such a hooligan has self-confidence, and is a very big shot in the industry. Getting few more connections will do you no harm. I'm doing this for your own good, Little Han."

Han Qi was skeptical. "Seriously?"

Dafei said solemnly, "Of course."

Han Qi made a noise in acknowledgment and moped, "OK, alright. I'll do my best."

Due to the special nature of the show, every participant on King of Masked Singers would need to have a dedicated assistant to take charge of their makeup, costumes, masks, communication, and other related tasks. But no matter how Han Qi thought about it, she felt like she had been deceived. Having been assigned to such an unreliable singer, she felt that her future was utterly bleak! But even she had to admit that this man's voice and singing were really

amazing!

Just who could it be?

Was there even such a person in the music industry?

Chapter 981: Mask: The Clown!

During the weekend.

The promotions for King of Masked Singers were already progressing as planned.

News of heavyweight big shots joining the show, being called a new variety show that would subvert all other singing shows, and all sorts of topics related to the show were constantly generated as the netizens grew more and more hyped!

"Who's joined the show already?"

"When does it begin broadcasting?"

"Quickly begin recording the show!"

"I can't wait any longer!"

"Is Zhang Ye really not going to be the host?"

"Will there be any A-list celebrities joining?"

"Don't leave us hanging!"

"King of Masked Singers? This title leaves everything to the

imagination!"

"They're really going to let established singers compete against each other on the same stage? To see who is better?"

"Damn, that's so ruthless!"

"Isn't Beijing TV taking things too far this time?"

"Yeah, they might really have taken it a bit too far! But I'm still looking forward to it!"

"That's right, I really want to watch it! Chen Guang versus Fan Wenli? A Heavenly King verse a Heavenly Queen? Will such a situation really happen? I can't bear it just thinking about it! Hurry up and start broadcasting already!"

"The most interesting thing is that everyone will be wearing a mask, so no one will know who the person behind it is!"

King of Masked Singers' format and title gradually surfaced. Even before the show got broadcast, while it was still in the production stage, the popularity of this show was already greater than the numerous television variety shows that were currently broadcasting! There was more discussion about it than all the others combined! A situation like this was typically not seen in the industry! When many of the industry peers saw this, they could only shake their heads and smile bitterly, or stare in amazement at the happenings.

Envy?

They had nothing to be envious about!

Because Zhang Ye's production was just too creative to begin with!

...

Dragon Television.

"We should have invited him to join us if we knew it would be like this!"

"Yeah, this show is truly going to be spectacular!"

"Just from hearing of it, I know it will become famous!"

"Did you think that Zhang Ye would be so easy to recruit?"

"That's right. He only went over to help them produce the show because he has friends at Beijing TV and past ties with the station."

...

Zhejiang Television.

"Zhang Ye is content to just work behind the scenes?"

"Who knows!"

"He couldn't possibly come up with such a good show and just give it up to Beijing TV so easily, can he?"

"He can't host even if he wants to, since the higher-ups' attitude toward him is still uncertain. That air pollution documentary brought him a great deal of popularity and reputation, but it has also disrupted his career."

"Hai, if only we had gotten this show instead!"

"King of Masked Singers? Only a daring person like Zhang Ye would come up with such a show!"

...

Heated discussions regarding this topic started appearing online.

It was widely discussed within the industry as well.

At home, Zhang Ye was practically doing nothing. He had already finished his detailed pre-production work for the show and was

essentially not involved with the rest of the production. Yesterday, Hu Fei had wanted to inform Zhang Ye about the identities of the masked singers who'd joined, but was turned down. Zhang Ye didn't even want to hear or know about them. This was because he did not want too much pressure and distractions for himself. If he knew who the other competitors were, he would probably start overthinking things, so it was better to know nothing at all.

Later that morning.

Old Rao called.

"Little Zhang, come over and babysit the kid."

"Where are you going?"

"To get a filling, tsk."

"Do you have a toothache?"

"It's been hurting for two days now. Cut the crap and get over here on the double."

"I'm still busy with my work."

"You've been staying home every day with nothing to do. What are you busy with?"

"Can't I watch a movie? Get my junior martial sister to take care of her instead."

"You talking 'bout that hothead? For only two smashed window panes, she risked her life by jumping down from this high a height. How can I be at ease letting her babysit my kid?"

"True, she is a little hotheaded."

"Get over here."

"Fine, fine. I understand. You just go on ahead."

After informing his parents, Zhang Ye headed straight to Old Rao's place.

When he arrived, Rao Aimin was already gone. For some reason, Yang Shu was at Rao Aimin's house as well. She was practicing her martial arts in the first story living room by herself, going "hoo ha, hoo ha," enraptured in her training!

When she saw Zhang Ye, Yang Shu quickly cooled down with an ending stance. She took a deep breath and respectfully greeted, "Senior Bro."

Zhang Ye smiled wryly. "You don't have to be so polite. I've already said that you can just call me by my name."

Yang Shu nodded. "OK, Senior Bro. Then can you lend me some money?"

Ah?

Asking to borrow money again?

Zhang Ye said in exasperation, "I think it's better for you to be more polite."

Yang Shu said nothing.

Zhang Ye asked, "You've run out of money again?"

Yang Shu made a noise of acknowledgment. "I haven't found a job yet."

Annoyed, Zhang Ye said, "You can't just keep staying at home doing nothing. What do you wish to do? Tell me."

"I would like to spread the art of the Taiji Fist so that it may flourish and bring glory to my ancestors."

"How will you spread it?"

"I don't know. I will listen to Senior Bro's teachings."

Why would you listen to me!

This bro does not have such aspirations!

However, Zhang Ye had only one junior martial sister, so he couldn't just ignore her. He pulled out all of the cash in his wallet, totaling over 3,000 RMB, and gave it to her.

Yang Shu didn't treat Zhang Ye as a stranger, but rather as family. She took it and pocketed it. "Thank you, Senior Bro."

At this moment, Chenchen came down from upstairs.

Zhang Ye looked up. "What were you doing upstairs?"

Chenchen gave him a look. "Zhang Ye, help me do my homework."

Zhang Ye sneered. "I refuse."

When Yang Shu heard this exchange, she said, "Senior Bro, teach me Taiji Fist."

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, "We'll talk about that another time."

Chenchen said, "Zhang Ye, do my homework for me!"

Yang Shu said, "Senior Bro, teach me some unarmed fighting techniques!"

The two of them kept it up one after the other, giving Zhang Ye a terrible headache.

The phone suddenly rang.

It was his other cell phone that was ringing!

"Alright, that's enough! Be quiet!" Zhang Ye said impatiently, "I need to answer this call before I can listen to the two of you again. Do you think things are easy for me?!"

Zhang Ye walked a distance away from them before answering the call.

It was the same woman's voice from a few days back on the other end of the line.

Han Qi carefully said: "Hello, Teacher. I'm Han Qi from the King of Masked Singers' program team. You can just call me Little Han. From now on, I'm your main liaison with the program team. If you require anything, you can find me anytime."

Zhang Ye pinched his throat and said: "OK."

Han Qi said: "Welcome aboard. Then...the rules of our show state that every participant must fashion a mask, so do you have any kind of designs in mind that you would like? And what about your stage name? We will construct a mask according to your specifications."

Zhang Ye blinked a few times. "I need to think about it."

Han Qi said: "Understood. You may call me anytime when you've thought of it."

"OK."

After hanging up, Zhang Ye fell into deep thought.

A mask?

A stage name?

He had to make sure to get it right as it was incredibly important.

What should he use?

What should he be called?

Zhang Ye couldn't think of one no matter how he tried, so he waved Yang Shu and Chenchen over. "Here's a task for the two of

you. Help me think of something. If you had to label me as something, what would your impression of me be?"

Chenchen chuckled. "A dummy!"

Zhang Ye stared at her. "I'm gonna spank you."

Chenchen looked at him. "But you really are a dummy."

Zhang Ye harrumphed. "Answer me properly and I'll help you do your homework!"

Chenchen immediately changed her tune and replied, "A hero!"

Dummy?

Hero?

Isn't your turnabout too damn fast?!

Why are you so fake!

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes and looked to Yang Shu. "Junior Sis?"

Yang Shu thought for a long time before saying, "I think that you have a chivalrous spirit for the country and its people."

These words from his junior martial sister had actually embarrassed Zhang Ye some!

Chivalrous?

He was not worthy of the description.

In truth, Zhang Ye had never had a high appraisal of himself. He did not feel that he was a hero, nor did he have anything to do with the word "chivalrous." He was just a celebrity who made people laugh, earned some money with a clear conscience along the way, stepped in whenever he saw injustice, and scolded people if he was forced into a corner by them. He would make trouble from one industry to another, so he was actually a disliked personality who offended and angered many people wherever he went.

Then why not this?

His stage name would be "The Clown."

If this world did not wish to let him say anything!

If this world was unwilling to let him appear!

If this world could not accommodate his pride!

If that is the case, then I shall transform into "The Clown."

Donning my war robes, putting on my mask, changing my identity, I will turn everything upside down once more!

Chapter 982: You want another song?

On this day.

Zhang Ye's mask and costume had arrived. It wasn't sent to his house because he didn't give his home address to the station. Otherwise, they might spot it and easily identify him as a result. The address he gave to the King of Masked Singers program team was his eldest younger sister's home address. The courier from Beijing Television had already reached her place.

His eldest younger sister's call came in.

"Brother, your package has arrived."

"Thanks."

"What's in it?"

"It's a secret, hur hur."

"You're acting so mysterious. Shall I send it over to your place?"

"There's no need. I'll go there in a bit to collect it."

By the afternoon, he had the package in his hands.

When he reached home, Zhang Ye shut his bedroom door before opening the package. Then he took the items out one by one. There were actually quite a few, as all the gear from head to toe was placed inside.

The mask.

The clothes.

The pants.

The shoes.

And a pair of gloves.

Zhang Ye lifted the mask and placed it over his face to check if it fit. He looked in the mirror and was immediately quite satisfied with it. Zhang Ye had had a fair number of specifications for the mask, and gave Han Qi a list of design details to pass to the costume designer. This mask was not exactly made to look like the stereotypical clown with a red nose and sharp facial features. It had only one color. White, pure white. It did not have any special edges or fanciful stylings. It was the simplest and plainest, pure white mask, but did not look plain at all when put on. Instead, it represented a return to innocence and appeared elegant and refined.

The Clown: this was how other people saw him.

White: this was how Zhang Ye saw himself.

A "clown" wearing a white mask. This was the inspiration behind Zhang Ye's design.

He also put on the costume. He was wrapped up from head to toe, and if he were to go outside now, absolutely no one would recognize him. Even he was unable to recognize himself, as all of the features and traits that distinguished him were covered up!

Fantastic!

This would do!

He took off the costume and placed everything back into the package. Then a call came in.

It was his other cell phone.

"Hello, Teacher. It's Han Qi."

"Hello."

"Have you received the mask and costume yet?"

"Yes."

"Does it fit? If not, I'll get the designer to alter it."

"It fits great."

"Great. So it's like this. Construction on the set has almost finished. We'll be doing some simple mic and sound tests tomorrow here in the studio. We would also like to have a look at all the participating teachers in their costumes. This is, after all, meant to be televised, so we need to do a check beforehand. There might also be an audition. The station has placed a lot of emphasis on the show this time and the execs are coming to inspect the production. If, if you're free, sir, could you please come and attend?"

"What time?"

"Tomorrow afternoon."

"OK."

"Th-Then please call me when you arrive, sir. I'll be waiting for you."

"OK."

An audition?

This was not unexpected.

Due to the special nature of this show, a lot of processes could not follow the standard operating procedures of previous shows. Especially for someone like him who would not even divulge his identity, how could he expect them to rest easy? He couldn't possibly assure them with just a recorded sample clip of his a cappella singing. They would have to at least listen to a live performance of his. While he was at it, he could familiarize himself with the stage and meet the program team staff. That was what it was all about.

Let's do it then.

He had been ready for a while now anyway.

...

The next day.

At 9 in the morning.

King of Masked Singers' program team staff were in full anticipation mode. Those who knew which celebrities were coming all felt excited, while those who didn't know the identities of the contestants were all curious and looking forward to it.

"Are they here yet?"

"Five of them have already arrived!"

"Where'd you arrange for them to go?"

"They've all been put into different waiting rooms so that they wouldn't bump into each other."

"Good."

"Brother Hu, when do we start?"

"We can start now. Make them come out one at a time."

"OK, I'll go and arrange it!"

"Be alert, the station heads might be coming to have a look."

"Understood!"

Everyone got down to business.

They adjusted the audio as the band did their sound checks.

After that, the first masked singer came onstage. He gave himself the stage name "Sunflower in the Starlight," and in accordance, his mask was designed to look like a cute sunflower. Other than Hu Fei and Dong Shanshan, basically no one else on the program team

knew who this person was. In an instant, everyone's gaze fell curiously upon him. He did not bring his agent or assistant along today, because it could have inadvertently revealed his identity. He came alone and walked to the band that the program team had invited. After communicating a few simple words with them, he stood onstage.

Although his face could not be seen through the mask, the moment he gripped the microphone, Teacher Sunflower in the Starlight's stage presence immediately changed!

The moment he opened his mouth, his voice shocked the entire studio!

This song was titled "Hope," and was a very famous song in this world!

The band members were under no pressure even though they did not have a prior discussion about the song with this masked teacher. They managed to sync up seamlessly to the meter and beat in no time at all!

They were all professionals, so it was no sweat.

Even though they were not familiar with the song, they could still easily play the accompaniment to the vocals. This was because they were the "Miracle Wheels," a very famous band in the industry. Most television shows would find it very difficult to invite them onto their show, so it could be seen how much effort Beijing Television had put into the production of this show!

...

Backstage.

In a waiting room.

Han Qi was waiting outside the room, restless and tense, unsure of what she was really feeling, though she mostly felt perturbed.

Why is he not here yet?

Where is he?

She made another call. "Hello, Teacher. Have you arrived yet?"

A voice came from the phone. "I have."

Han Qi said: "Ah? Where are you?"

That person said: "Turn around."

She suddenly heard the voice coming from behind her.

Han Qi turned around in consternation. "D-Did you come here wearing that?"

The Clown said, "Yes."

Han Qi had thought that she could finally see the man's real face today and find out who he was. But she didn't expect that he would make his way here while wearing his mask. "Uh, are you ready, sir?"

"I'm ready anytime."

Han Qi coughed. "Teacher Clown, are you a senior of the music industry?" She began trying to sound him out.

"Guess."

"Uh, you must surely be quite the big shot."

"Not necessarily."

"What's your actual occupation, sir?"

"I'm a worker."

Han Qi was speechless.

You're still saying you're a worker?

Can you stop pretending, please?

She knew that it was impossible to find out anything. This person was much too evasive and obviously did not want to disclose any information. He clearly did not want anyone to find out his identity!

But, but you still shouldn't say that you are a worker just because of that!

The two of them went into the waiting room and sat facing each other. The atmosphere was extremely awkward.

The Clown did not say a word. It seemed like he did not enjoy talking much.

Meanwhile, Han Qi did not know what to say. But as she didn't want things to be so awkward, she attempted to make conversation.

"Your mask is really beautiful."

"Thank you."

"You're not too old, right?"

"I'm not young."

"Ah, last time you said you weren't old, sir."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"Oh, then I'm not old."

Han Qi was on the verge of tears. Talking to this guy was nothing but a goddamn exercise in smoke and mirrors. She couldn't tell which of the things The Clown said were true and which were false. Most importantly, he was still speaking in a gravelly voice, so how could she possibly guess who it was? She simply could not make out who he was!

This deadlock went on for a good half hour.

Suddenly, someone knocked gingerly on the door.

Dong dong. They heard an employee say, "Han Qi, it's time for the teacher to go onstage."

"Alright!" Han Qi felt a great sense of relief. "Teacher Clown, it's your turn."

The Clown nodded. "Let's go."

In the corridor.

Zhang Ye was walking out as someone came in.

Coming in the opposite direction was someone wearing a mask. The figure appeared to be a woman's.

As Zhang Ye and she passed each other, the two of them gave each other a curious glance. There was a hint of scrutiny in their eyes. Those eyes, that figure. Zhang Ye felt a hint of familiarity. He believed he had probably seen this young woman before, and may even know her. But as for who she was, he could not tell. Upon further consideration, he realized that the stars he knew in the industry were not small-timers. It looked like this competition was truly going to be a tough battle. In his first foray into the music industry, it had better not end up with him getting crushed within the first two rounds! That would be really embarrassing!

The two of them stopped in their tracks with unspoken agreement, and then looked at one another.

Han Qi wiped her sweat away and introduced them to each other. "This is Teacher Clown. And this is Teacher Sunset Glow."

Wasn't she pretty young?

So why did she call herself Sunset Glow?

Zhang Ye nodded his head in greeting.

Sunset Glow looked at him. "Do we know each other?"

Zhang Ye spoke in a gravelly voice, "I don't know."

Sunset Glow smiled. "How old are you?"

Zhang Ye lied without blinking. "Fifty, and you?"

Sunset Glow said, "I'm fifteen."

Zhang Ye blinked. "Your occupation?"

Sunset Glow said, "I'm a student, and you?"

Zhang Ye replied, "I'm a worker."

Sunset Glow had no response.

Though they tried to sound each other out with all those questions, neither managed to identify the other.

Both Han Qi and Sunset Glow's Beijing Television assistant didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Why were all modern celebrities like this?

A worker?

A student?

Fifty?

Fifteen?

Would you two die if you ever stopped bullshitting?!

Chapter 983: As a fifty-year-old pro driver, I am all smiles!

On the King of Masked Singers stage.

The set was not fully constructed yet, but it was enough to accommodate the sound checks.

There were many people seated in the audience, such as the station heads, channel directors, and Hu Fei, together with most of his program team. They had already auditioned five masked singers, and it was time for the sixth contestant. They had to take into consideration the live performances as well as other various factors to determine the order of appearances, to know which contestant would start in the first round or act as a replacement in the second round. All of this were not yet decided, so it was particularly important today as they needed to understand each of the contestant's strengths and characteristics in order to make a decision.

Hu Fei lowered his head and jotted a few things down on his notepad.

Contestant #1: Recommended as opener, has explosive high notes.

Contestant #2: Recommended as opener, a big name celebrity.

"How amazing!"

"Yeah, these singers are way too impressive!"

"I've got the goosebumps!"

"This wasn't even rehearsed. If it were the day of recording, how much more shocking would it get?"

"Our show is gonna get super popular!"

"Who's the next contestant? Are they here yet?"

"Yup."

"The next one is 'The Clown.'"

"Who's The Clown?"

"It's that oil worker!"

As soon as those words were spoken, the program team staff all snickered!

"Pfft!"

"So it's him!"

"Why did he come up with that name?"

"Now I'm even more interested in him!"

"Me too. I can finally see him in person!"

"Observe him, everyone. See if you can identify who he is! Figure out just which industry seasoned pro he is!"

During the past few days, "I Offer Oil To My Homeland" had spread throughout the station. The program team staff would laugh until their stomachs hurt every time they listened to it. Even a few of the station heads didn't know whether to laugh or cry after hearing it.

In the meantime, a few of the station heads started conversing.

A deputy station head asked, "Is this the celebrity who claims to be a worker?"

Hu Fei laughed and said, "Yes, that's him.

Another station executive said, "He sings really well, but that song..."

Dong Shanshan was also seated with them. She smiled and said, "That was just an audition demo. He was just ribbing us. I'm sure

he'll sing a proper song for us today."

The executive nodded. "Yeah, I'm quite looking forward to it."

Suddenly, everyone's gaze fell on a side door next to the stage.

The door swung open and a white mask appeared before everyone's eyes!

He had arrived!

The Clown had arrived!

Some people even stopped blinking and tried to guess who he was from his shape, but drew a blank. Who could this be? He had a figure that was very common and could match too many celebrities!

When Han Qi saw that so many executives were present, she got a little nervous. "Teacher Clown is here."

However, The Clown did not seem to be the slightest bit nervous. He took to the stage very gracefully and stood there while looking at everyone in the audience. He gave them a slight nod, but did not say anything.

The station heads, Hu Fei, and Dong Shanshan scrutinized him.

He walked in with great confidence!

He stood there with great confidence!

The first thought that they had was: This is definitely not a newcomer!

As Dong Shanshan was the host, she took charge of this segment. She raised the microphone in her hands and said with a smile, "Hello, Teacher. Out of all the contestants, you're the only one we have zero information about. You don't need to tell us your name, but could you please briefly introduce yourself?"

Zhang Ye felt very happy at seeing his old classmate speak to him in such a serious manner without recognizing him.

Zhang Ye was smiling to himself. He purposely spoke in a gravelly voice, "I am The Clown."

He was especially cautious when speaking to Dong Shanshan. After all, they had been classmates for a long time and knew each other very well. If he accidentally revealed anything, Dong Shanshan might begin to suspect who he really was. However, Zhang Ye was still rather confident in his acting chops as he had previously received quite a few skill experience books related to acting.

Dong Shanshan asked, "That's all?"

Hu Fei asked, "How old are you?"

Zhang Ye didn't even blink. "Fifty."

Hu Fei felt his legs give. "Are you also a worker then?"

Zhang Ye said, "Eh, how did you know?"

Dafei wiped his sweat away. "Teacher, can you please stop teasing us?"

Zhang Ye replied, "But I'm really a worker."

The program team staff rolled their eyes in unison!

Pretend!

Go on and keep pretending!

A station head said with a wry smile, "Since he does not wish to tell us, let's not force him."

A chairman looked at him, then commented, "He must be a big shot in the industry. Otherwise, why would he be so cautious as to not even reveal his age?"

The channel's director nodded. "Makes sense."

Dong Shanshan looked at Zhang Ye. "Then why don't we begin?"

The band was ready.

The Miracle Wheels' keyboardist asked, "Teacher Clown, what song do you intend to perform? We need to do some tuning."

Zhang Ye looked at him. "An original."

"An original?" That keyboardist was taken aback, but nodded and said, "That's fine too."

The drummer said, "Go ahead and sing. We can improvise."

Zhang Ye said, "Are you sure?"

The drummer smiled. "Of course, it's no problem. We're all professionals."

There had just been two masked singers who had arranged their songs. Whether they'd sustained high notes or slowed down the song, even when it was performed differently from the original, the Miracle Wheels could still accompany the performers. They were one of the best bands around, so how could they not do that? It was just improvisation. What was so difficult about that?

The guitarist said, "Let's hit it, Teacher."

In the audience, everyone was engrossed by the happenings onstage!

Hu Fei's ears perked up.

Dong Shanshan did not blink.

Han Qi was also eyeing the stage, hoping to catch a glimpse of something that would reveal The Clown's identity.

A worker?

You've been acting since the start!

This time, I want to see how you can keep pretending!

A love song? Or a rock song? Once you start singing, there will surely be something that gives you away. At that time, I will definitely be able to guess your true identity!

A lot of people were thinking the same thing as Han Qi, as everyone wanted to guess the identity of this man. They couldn't have it such that not even their internal staff knew who this guy was, could they?

However, when The Clown starting singing, they realized that they were too naïve in their thinking! They finally realized just

how much of a seasoned pro they had encountered!

Zhang Ye lifted the microphone in his hands and started singing with enthusiasm.

"We workers have the strength and pow'r!

"We workers have the strength and pow'r!

"Working hard every single day!

"Building all these high-rise buildings!

"Laying railways for coal mining!

"Reforming the world, we've changed it!"

Two of Beijing Television's heads were floored!

The program team staff in the audience were all bowled over!

"Machines are started: rumbling loud!

"Raising our hammers: clink clank clunk!

"Making plows: the production's good!

"Forging guns: to send to the front!

"Heave ho, heave ho!

"A red glow shines on our faces!

"Our sweat drips down off our faces!

"For what? For the revolution!

"For what? For the revolution!"

The Miracle Wheels' band members' jaws all dropped. Throughout, they could not even accompany him with a beat. They just stared in astonishment at the masked singer onstage, feeling as though 10,000 grass mud horses were galloping past!

Improvisation?

I'll improvise your sister!

What the fuck is this song! How the fuck can we possibly improvise to that!

But listening to that Teacher Clown's voice, they couldn't help but admit one thing—his singing was so fucking good! That voice

was marvelous!

The music stopped.

Well alright, there wasn't actually any music to begin with. The entire time, Zhang Ye had been singing a cappella. The Miracle Wheels, who had just bragged about their professionalism, ended up not even playing a melody.

Zhang Ye finished performing.

Everyone in the audience smiling wryly.

It was another workers' song?

Yesterday was oil workers!

And today? Railroad workers? Coal miners?

Geez, friend, can you stop being so inspirational?!

Can you please sing properly! How do you expect us to guess who you are this way?

Hu Fei cleared his throat, looked at The Clown, and said, "Teacher, you sing great and very professionally. We all recognize your singing and strength, but about that, um, can you please

switch to a different song? Can you sing something that is closer to your actual job? Are you a professional singer? Or an actor? Why don't you do another song?"

Zhang Ye nodded. "Sure."

Hu Fei said, "Thank you."

Everyone was once again in full anticipation as they believed he would finally sing something proper.

Something related to my job?

Alright, then I have no choice but to reveal my real occupation to all of you!

Without even skipping a beat, Zhang Ye sang the next song loudly. The moment he belted out the first line, he made the 50 to 60 people present in the studio so angry they wanted to vomit blood!

"As a fifty-year-old pro driver, I am all smiles!

"I tend to get long-winded when talkin' 'bout trucks!"

Pfft!

Dong Shanshan had her face in her hands and was laughing uncontrollably!

Han Qi was floored!

Hu Fei stared blankly!

You've become a pro driver this time? And you're even a fucking fifty-year-old pro driver? You even fucking all smiles about it?

I'll smile at your second granny!

However, Zhang Ye was very into the song and painted a vivid picture.

"Thinkin' o' when I was 18 'n' learned how to drive, oh.

"Fid'ling with that foreign truck, I b'came an old hand.

"Since, of course, I have yet to see a Chinese truck.

"Praying to the moon and stars, praying for that truck to come!
And, it did! Yo-o-o ho hey!

"Our working class wins glory for our country, hey!"

Everyone felt numb and watched him in stupefaction.

But the more Zhang Ye sang, the more enjoyment and excitement he got out of it.

"Full of pride, I have the power!

"Hey-hey-hey, hey-hey-hey.

"Heh-heh-heya.

"My-y-y country's la-a-and spans far and wide.

"I drive my domestic truck merrily along.

"In the blink of an eye, I've traveled all across China.

"Load up all the construction material onto my truck, oh.

"Night and day, no stops, hey!

"Shipping grain, lugging steel,

"Climbing mountains, crossing rivers,

"I will take it into my own hands to build our China! Yo-o-o ho hey! Hey!

"Even with 50 or 60 more years, I shall never come to a stop!"

"Hey-hey-hey!"

"Hey-hey-hey-hey!"

"Heh-heh-heh-heh-heh-heh-heh-heyo!"

With one last deep breath, Zhang Ye sang in a sustained line in his head voice, "I shall never come to a stop!"

He finished singing.

The song ended.

In the audience, very few people were left "standing" as everyone had been bowled over!

Stop the truck!

Hurry up and stop the truck, bro!

Hats off to him!

They truly commended him!

Almost nobody could play dumb to his extent!

Oil workers? Coal miners? Railroad workers? And this time, it was a truck driver? Even if you live for another 50-60 years, you shall never come to a stop? Aren't you going to drive yourself to death then!

Truly, everybody was defeated by this masked singer who went by the name of The Clown!

["I Offer Oil to My Homeland"](#)?

["We Workers Have the Strength and Pow'r"](#)?

["Pro Driver"](#)?

What the fuck are all these songs!

Did you have to go that far to hide your identity? Just who on earth are you!?

[I Offer Oil to My Homeland](#)

[We Workers Have the Strength and Pow'r](#)

[Pro Driver](#)

Chapter 984: You have the cheek to call others weird?

Teacher Clown's audition was over.

Every employee in the studio found it both funny and annoying!

A lovely King of Masked Singers.

A lovely variety show.

A lovely stage meant for the performance of pop music.

But good god! It was fucking turned into a retirees' concert for old cadres of the working class, with songs talking about events before and after the revolution. Even if you sang a song from 10 to 20 years ago, we would still have considered it pop! But which era were your songs from? They were all songs from 50 to 60 years ago, perhaps even 60 to 70 years ago!

Han Qi thought to herself how her dad had probably just been born when these songs hit the airwaves!

How did you even come up with songs like that?

You're too good at making things up!

The performance had knocked most of the audience dead. The previous five masked singers had also purposely tried to hide and disguise their real voices. One of them even sang their song entirely in a falsetto. But even so, compared to those before him, the way that this masked singer named "The Clown" had concealed his identity made the other five people's methods not even worth mentioning! In order to hide his identity, he went as far as composing these three revolutionary style songs himself or with the help of someone else!

He pretended to be a coal miner after pretending to be an oil worker!

He pretended to be a trucker after pretending to be a coal miner!

Would you be convinced by that?

Would you?

In any case, Hu Fei, Hou Ge, Hou Di, and the rest of the program team were all prostrating!

They were convinced!

A lot of them were actually kneeling in worship on the inside as they listened to the end of the song!

Hu Fei looked behind him. "Sirs, what about him?"

A deputy station head who was neither laughing nor crying said, "Why are there even such people?"

A station chief coughed and said, "People involved in the performing arts are probably a little bit different, you know?"

"There's a lot of people in the performing arts," the deputy station head said, "but I've never seen one that takes it as far as him. In order to protect his identity, he pretended to be some retired old worker? And belt out revolutionary song after revolutionary song? Coming up with all sorts of tricks? He acted like he was a worker until it became a drama! He turned these working class songs into a series! When he gets onto the actual stage, he better not turn into a textile or subway worker! Who could bear that?"

Hu Fei was entertained. "Sir, that definitely won't happen. When the day of recording arrives, he will definitely sing properly. I'm just curious as to who he really is."

Another station head suddenly said, "Did you all forget? The contract."

When everyone heard that, their eyes lit up!

Right!

The contract had yet to be signed!

They still required him to sign it in person in order to participate!

The Clown had already gone offstage.

Hu Fei asked, "Are there any more contestants lined up?"

Dafei quickly answered, "There are two more teachers who have just arrived, but they're both still getting ready."

"Alright, let them wait a bit." Hu Fei immediately called out to Zhang Ye, "Teacher Clown, a word, please."

The Clown looked at him.

Hu Fei held up the contract. "You must be an industry insider, so you must surely know that there is a requirement to sign a contract before you can appear on the show. Please look over it."

The Clown acknowledged and walked over to them. He held the contract in his gloved hand and swept his eyes several times across the contract.

Hu Fei said, "It just outlines the duties of the artist, such as attending the show's recording on time—it's the same as any other contract. The contract period runs until the end of the show's broadcast. If you've verified that there are no problems, please sign your name here. Oh, by the way, it has to be your real name, else

there's no legality, and that wouldn't do."

Everyone was thinking that he would reject it.

But this man wearing a clown mask did not even hesitate. He picked up a pen and signed his name in a few quick strokes.

Hu Fei was taken aback.

A few of the station heads were also taken aback.

They grabbed the contract and squeezed together to look at it. Their jaws dropped.

"This is?"

"What name is this?"

"I can't read it?"

"Th-This is your real name?"

Although he did sign his real name, it was so flamboyant none of them could read it.

The Clown said, "It's 100% my real name."

He was not lying. He did indeed sign it as "Zhang Ye," which was his real name. But of course, Zhang Ye was a calligrapher too. Regular script? Clerical script? Semi-cursive script? Cursive script? He knew all of those. As long as he didn't wish for anyone to read his handwriting, most ordinary folk would not be able to read it. And even if they wanted Zhang Ye to explain the characters he wrote down, he could easily tell them about the strokes that were written. His name and his signature would definitely match up!

A deputy station head was flabbergasted. "Teacher, you're making things very difficult for us by doing this. If we don't even know who you are, how can we pay you your appearance fees?"

Zhang Ye shook his head. "Just take care of my meals."

Take care of his meals?

No need for any appearance fees?

Damn, aren't you too easy to fool? But it was true; the working class had always had low requirements.

They had no other ideas left anyway. Having encountered such a stubborn veteran, what else could they do? They couldn't possibly deny him an appearance on the show, could they? With such good vocals, it would be a real pity not to have him! Besides, the man beneath the mask might really be some big name celebrity, and that would mean viewership ratings! Who would willingly give that up?

The Clown walked off.

Leaving only the program team staff whispering to one another.

"Could he have really been a worker?"

"The hell, you really believe that?"

"Uh, how else could he have sung those songs with such enthusiasm?"

"Who knows."

"I still can't figure it out!"

"Yeah, those three songs have me befuddled!"

"He's way too good at faking it!"

"We might really have to wait until the start of the competition to find out what he's truly capable of."

"He hides himself really well. But is it worth it?"

"He doesn't even want the appearance fees? Perhaps he's not

actually a big name celebrity?"

"God only knows!"

However, when writing their evaluations, everyone still gave him very good reviews.

Hu Fei wrote: Bel canto maestro.

Dafei wrote: Recommended as opener.

Dong Shanshan wrote: Able to sing old songs well, very unique.

...

Backstage.

In The Clown's waiting room.

Han Qi followed him back.

"Teacher."

"Hm?"

"There are a few more masked singer auditions taking place later.

When everything is over, there will be an internal meeting."

"Meeting the other contestants?"

"No, no, it's just showing everyone's singing to each other so that everyone can have a listen. Of course, it will only be a small portion of the actual singing, just a few lines. That's to allow the contestants to 'greet' to each other with their vocals. Of course, if you don't wish to make yourself known to them in advance, you may decline to partake in this internal meeting. We are more lenient about that. But out of respect for everyone else, if you do not wish to take part, you won't be allowed to listen to their singing from the auditions."

"OK."

"So your decision is?"

"I'm fine with that."

"OK."

Zhang Ye was fine with the arrangement. He had already done so much to conceal his identity. If someone could still recognize him, he would have to hand it to them. In truth, even if he did not hide himself this way, people were not likely to identify him. That was because Zhang Ye had only sung officially in public once before, during Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala where he performed "A Letter to Home." His singing then was done in a

more "recitative" style and was considered casual, so the industry insiders all knew that he couldn't really sing and would therefore not likely associate him to this current identity. As such, Zhang Ye was not afraid to let others hear his singing. In fact, he wanted to listen to the other masked singers to find out their strengths!

Half an hour...

One hour...

Finally, the auditions for the masked singers who came over today were finished!

Shortly after, Han Qi knocked on the door and came in. "Teacher, we're ready!"

Zhang Ye said, "OK."

There was a television in the waiting room.

Han Qi turned it on and changed some settings before an image appeared on the screen. This was clearly not a broadcast signal, but an internal one.

Zhang Ye, with mask on, looked over.

The first singer's voice came from the TV.

"The ni-i-ight's cooled down.

"The wi-i-ind's died down.

"But where, oh where, are you?"

It was a woman's voice!

All the notes were sung in a falsetto!

It might look like very easy to sing in a falsetto, but it was particularly difficult to control. It required a lot of skill, yet this woman's falsetto was flawless and would make anyone who heard it shiver!

Zhang Ye looked at her name.

Stage name: Petal Shower.

Who was it?

He could not figure out who she was just from listening!

Following her, the next voice sounded!

"The sun is my name.

"Heaven is my faith.

"The Earth is my refuge

"Humanity is my enemy."

It was a woman's voice again!

It was a very gentle and soothing female voice!

Upon hearing it for the first time, it didn't sound too special. But this voice was the type that became more pleasant the more you listened to it. It was the kind of voice that would slowly and lightly creep into your soul!

It was wonderful!

And who might this be?

Looking at her stage name, it was Sunset Glow!

So it was her! She had bumped into Zhang Ye earlier in the corridor. He felt that she should be someone he had come across before, although he could not recognize her.

Next, a man's voice rang out!

This was the voice of that man called "Sunflower in the Starlight."

"Oh!

"Yiya, oh!

"I don't believe that my life is worse than others!

"I don't believe that I have no talent!

"I don't believe that I'm destined to be a lowly person!

"I don't believe that my songs will be left unanswered forever!"

This was a song from this world, Zhang Yuanqi's old song, "I Don't Believe," although he made several arrangements to the score. His voice had very strong carrying power, and his high notes were very powerful!

He was certainly going to be a formidable adversary!

Moreover, Zhang Ye was positive that this man was a professional singer. This was because if he were an actor or a host, even with great talent and singing, he couldn't possibly belt like that. This guy's voice was like a well-tempered and highly polished blade!

Then the fourth contestant.

Followed by the fifth.

And the sixth.

Zhang Ye was looking more and more helpless, thinking about how these contestants were much too fearsome!

It wasn't until he heard the seventh person's voice that he felt a little relieved.

This man's stage name was "The Yak."

Although he sang well, there were some flaws that could be heard in his singing. There were some articulation issues and other details of his singing that lacked quite a fair bit compared to the others, so he likely wasn't a professional singer. Or perhaps it was a newcomer to the music industry? Hai, but when it came down to the real competition, nothing was certain. The live studio atmosphere, the audience demographics, the choice of song, the order of appearances, the actual performance, all of these would affect the final results. Zhang Ye would not venture say that this guy would definitely get eliminated until the outcome was announced. Who knew? If he picked well and chose a song that resonated with the audience, then they might very well just vote for him.

As a result, he knew not to disregard any of them!

None of the competitors would be easy to deal with!

Zhang Ye memorized all of their names by heart. He also knew they were not the only contestants. They were just the tip of the iceberg!

After the clips were played.

Han Qi looked at him with her beady eyes and blinked several times. "Teacher Clown, what do you think?"

Zhang Ye stopped up his throat and commented in a gravelly voice, "They're alright. The Yak is average at singing, but for Petal Shower to sing entirely in falsetto, she's a little weird."

Han Qi's vision swam!

Weird?

You have the cheek to call others weird?

Damn! Out of the entire group, you're the weirdest one, OK?!

...

Waiting Room #1.

The voice of The Clown was reverberating through the room.

"How glorious it is to be an oil worker!

"Wearin' a hard hat and trav'lin' the world!"

The masked man with the stage name, "Sunflower in the Starlight," was staring, slack-jawed!

...

Waiting Room #2.

"We workers have the strength and pow'r!

"We workers have the strength and pow'r!"

Petal Shower nearly fell off the sofa!

...

Waiting Room #4.

"As a fifty-year-old pro driver, I am all smiles!

"I tend to get long-winded when talkin' 'bout trucks!

"Thinkin' o' when I was 18 'n' learned how to drive, oh."

"Fid'ling with that foreign truck, I b'came an old hand."

Sunset Glow was wide-eyed and tongue-tied!

...

The people in the other waiting rooms were also reacting similarly!

All these masked singers were dumbfounded by what they heard!

Fuck!

What the fuck are these songs?

Who the fuck is this guy?

Did you come here to hold a union meeting or what?!

Could it be a veteran singer? Or an old performing artist who sang? But that voice did not sound like it! It didn't feel that old!

Damn, just what kind of a person did King of Masked Singers invite this time?

"What a weirdo!" This was the evaluation of The Clown by all the other masked singers!

They were also speculating about the identity of "The Clown."

A bel canto singer?

Did he sing opera?

Just like how Zhang Ye was curious about who they were!

They were also extremely curious as to who "The Clown" was, as well as the identities of the other contestants!

For this unprecedented variety show, no one knew their competitors, so maybe this was where the real fun lay!

Chapter 985: A female celebrity in trouble

The next day.

Early in the morning, his parents had gone out to buy groceries.

After washing up, Zhang Ye closed his bedroom door and stayed inside to make a list of songs. Although it was still some days away until the official recording of King of Masked Singers, he definitely had to make some preparations beforehand. Frankly, with so many songs in his head, he did not know which song he'd pick to sing when he got on stage.

This song?

No, it was too normal.

That song?

That wouldn't do either as it was unsuitable for him.

Or that song?

Mhm, that song was alright, so he shortlisted it as a backup.

After working at it for one full hour, Zhang Ye was still not finished with the song list and was forced to lay the thought to rest for the time being. Since he did not have any inspiration today, he

would stop thinking about it for now. He would decide on which song to sing at a later time. As such, he chose to practice his singing, as it was going to be his prime weapon. If his voice was not good and he did not sing well, it would be pointless even if he chose the best songs, since he wouldn't be able to move the hearts of the audience. Together with his stage presence, the musical arrangement, and the control of the live studio atmosphere, all of those might affect the audience's auditory and visual perception, which would then be reflected in the final score.

He still had many things that he needed to practice in the coming days.

So it was better to take it slow.

"Ah, woooo.

"Ah, haaaah.

"Ah, yi, yaaaah."

He began doing vocal cord warmups to train himself. This was the same as martial arts. Just learning wasn't enough. One would still have to practice diligently. Otherwise, though Zhang Ye had eaten 500 Fruits of Charm (Voice) and 500 Singing Skill Experience Books, he could not wield them effectively.

Coupled with the audition at Beijing Television yesterday, he realized that there were many other masked singers with

astounding voices. The pressure on him was great, so naturally he would have to do more prep work. Zhang Ye knew that if he went onstage in his current shape, he would definitely not win. Those singers were the country's cream of the crop, surely consisting of some professional singers who might already have been singing for ten or twenty years. This was something that Zhang Ye could not compare with.

One day.

Three days.

Five days.

He did not do anything other than practicing and refining his vocals every day during this period of time.

The octave his high notes reached.

How long his falsetto could last.

What the auditory feedback of his low notes were.

How to control his breathing and whether his modulations were mellow.

He had to understand everything. Through experimentation, Zhang Ye gained a deeper understanding of his voice and singing

techniques during these several days. Only by knowing his true skill could he exert his strength to the fullest. That would allow him to capitalize on his strong points and minimize his shortcomings.

...

The promotions for King of Masked Singers were in full swing.

On this day, a call from Hu Fei arrived.

"Zhang'er, we're going to film the promo soon."

"OK."

"Do you have any suggestions?"

"Since you're the director, I shouldn't be making any suggestions. But if you need me to come up with a tagline or something, that's not a problem. As for how you want to film it, I'll leave it entirely to you."

"Are you really planning not to participate?"

"Hur hur, didn't I tell you already? I'd only be responsible for the pre-production. Brother Hu, I've been banned at long last, so why don't you let me rest a couple days."

"That won't do. Let's go together. You can give some advice while we're there."

"Where are you filming?"

"Not too far away. Just around the Beijing area."

"Well, OK."

"This will only be a concept-based promo, so there's no need for the contestants to personally take part. We plan on creating an atmosphere like a martial arts conference, with masked experts from all walks of life facing off against each other in a battle to the death. We need the feel of experts fighting each other, so we've booked a training hall for the setting. The view over there is not bad, and the atmosphere is also suitable for what we want. We'll head there first to get a feel for the place and see if we can create the effect we want."

"A training hall?"

"Yeah, that land is owned by the 'Lian Family Style School.' They're a martial sect with a real martial arts lineage, unlike some training halls that hold deceptive recruitment drives and demand joining fees. They don't usually welcome outsiders. There's an old film called Death Battle, have you watched it before? The latter half of the movie was filmed there, so it's quite a famous place. The two houses that appeared in the movie became quite popular later on. Some tourists were even attracted by its fame to the point it nearly became a minor tourism spot. I heard that a film Ning Lan

will be starring in will also be going there to do some on-location shooting in the next couple days."

The Lian Family Style School?

He didn't know about them as he was not very familiar with the martial sects and schools of the Chinese martial arts world.

"Forget it, Brother Hu. I think it's better that I don't go."

"Ah? What's the matter?"

"If you're going to a training hall, I won't be joining you guys."

"But why? We're setting off tomorrow morning and can be back by evening at the earliest, so it wouldn't really delay anything for you. Hey, you're unemployed. What can be keeping you busy?"

"It's better that I don't go."

"Didn't you just say that you would go?"

"Man."

Would he have to tell him that it was because he was a notorious figure in the Chinese martial arts world?

Even if he told him that, Hu Fei wouldn't believe it!

Zhang Ye briefly discussed the concept for the promotional clip with Hu Fei and brought up some of his ideas before hanging up. Regarding the Chinese martial arts world, Zhang Ye's current stand was: "If you people do not provoke me, I will not provoke any of you. Let's just stay far away from each other so that we can save the trouble of finding each other an eyesore." He would not worry about the promotional video. Since the promo was getting produced, it meant the broadcast of the show was approaching. Zhang Ye had to make the best of it and practice his singing.

He practiced his singing for yet another day.

As well as wrote down a few concepts regarding some musical arrangements.

He was certain he wanted to go onstage with original songs, so his workload was much greater than everyone else. He had to arrange many of the songs himself, or at least come up with some ideas so that he could communicate them to the band members and music director who were invited to King of Masked Singers.

...

The next day.

Between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning.

Zhang Ye was still under the covers, sleeping, when he heard his cell phone beep nonstop. They were notifications from the chat app, with messages coming in one after another, waking him up.

Who was it?

Why would anyone send so many messages in a row?

Groggy, Zhang Ye checked his cell phone. Oh, so the message notifications came from the Celebrity Goof Group, where almost all of the Heavenly Kings, Heavenly Queens, and A-list celebrities were members.

Since he was already awake, he casually browsed through the messages.

With over a hundred messages, Zhang Ye became more startled the more he browsed.

The first morning message was actually sent by Ning Lan around ten minutes ago.

Ning Lan: "Please help."

Huo Dongfang: "What happened?"

Xiaodong: "What happened, Sister Ning?"

Fan Wenli: "What's the matter?"

A lot of people appeared and responded.

Ning Lan sent a bitter smile emoticon and said: "We came to Lian Jia Gou for filming this morning. Due to a minor misunderstanding, someone in our filming team offended the Lian Family Style School. It blew up into a rather big affair and now our equipment has been withheld by them and they refuse to let us leave!"

Huo Dongfang: "Lian Jia Gou?"

Chen Guang said: "Old Ning, are you alright?"

Ning Lan: "I'm alright for now."

At this moment, Zhang Yuanqi appeared. "Have you called the police yet?"

Ning Lan: "Already done. The police are here and are talking with them. But it looks like it's gonna be pointless. We suggested compensating them monetarily but they wouldn't accept, so is there anyone here who can help us out? Please contact me, thanks."

Zhang Yuanqi: "I'll help you ask around."

Ning Lan: "Hurry up!"

Zhang Yuanqi: "Don't rush me. I'm already making some calls."

Everyone in the entertainment industry knew that Zhang Yuanqi and Ning Lan were close friends with a very good relationship. Although Zhang Ye had never met Ning Lan—who was an A-list celebrity in the film industry—in person before, they had chatted together in the group quite often.

Zhang Ye was still reading the chat history at the moment.

Zhang Yuanqi: "I've checked with a few people for you, but they can't do anything about it. The Lian Family Style School is a martial sect of the martial arts community whose unarmed fighting techniques are an intangible cultural asset. They don't have much interaction with the outside world, and the martial arts teachers that I approached were unqualified to talk to them. Old Jiang is in their circle, right? I'll help you @ him. He's a member of the martial arts community, so he should be able to help out. @JiangHanwei." Then Zhang Yuanqi said: "If he's not here, you can just call him."

Xiaodong, who was on extremely good terms with Jiang Hanwei, added: "@JiangHanwei Uncle Jiang, Sis Ning has met with some trouble."

Jiang Hanwei was also one of the chat members in the group, though Zhang Ye had not seen him say anything yet. Of course, this was partly due to the fact that Zhang Ye had recently joined the group.

After seven or eight messages.

Jiang Hanwei's name finally came up. "I just saw this. I don't really have any connections with the Lian Family Style and have not had any dealings with them before either. But I'll make a call to help you ask around and see if they're willing to give me some face."

Ning Lan: "Thank you so much, Brother Jiang."

Jiang Hanwei: "Don't mention it. Let me try making a call."

Jiang Hanwei was extremely skilled in martial arts, though his status was a little bit more aloof in the entertainment industry due to his big brother status. But he knew many people and was highly respected by them. But in the Chinese martial arts world, Jiang Hanwei's reputation was not really that great as he did not belong to any martial sect or school. He was previously a disciple of the Huashan Sect, but was later expelled for reasons unknown. At most, he could be considered a former disciple of the Huashan Sect, although that wasn't exactly much of a good reputation either. In the Chinese martial arts world, seniority and pedigree were emphasized with even more importance than in the entertainment industry. Even if the Jiang Hanwei Stunt Team had a sparkling reputation in the entertainment industry and around the country, many people in the real "martial arts community" refused to acknowledge him.

A few minutes later, sure enough.

Jiang Hanwei said: "I called them, but they aren't willing to give any face to me."

Xiaodong was a warm-hearted girl. "Uncle Jiang, you have such a high status, yet they won't even give you any face? What gives them the right to do that!"

Jiang Hanwei said helplessly: "The Chinese martial arts world is different from the entertainment industry. The 'martial arts community' is a more sealed off place. There are more rules as well. Once you've violated their taboos, they might really take it to the bitter end with you. Ning Lan, I heard about your people stepping on their Heavenly Rock that was passed down by their ancestral founder. No wonder they risked their lives."

Ning Lan sighed and said: "It was because one of our cameramen wanted to find a better angle to shoot from. But he didn't know that the rock held significance, so he crossed the fence and stepped onto it. We apologized, but it was no use! Everyone is trapped here now! We can't even retrieve our equipment!"

Jiang Hanwei advised: "Try to think of another way. I have no means to handle this. I really can't do much to help you."

Fan Wenli said: "Even reporting it to the police doesn't work?"

Chen Guang: "But still, they can't detain you like this!"

Xiaodong: "Then what can we do?"

Ning Lan: "The police is afraid to lock horns with them too. More and more of their sect members are gathering around now! Things look bad! Brother Jiang, you used to be part of the martial arts community. What do you think we should do?"

Jiang Hanwei: "Even monetary compensation didn't work?"

Ning Lan: "It didn't work, they wouldn't accept!"

Jiang Hanwei: "Such a problem is not easy to handle."

Xiaodong: "@Everyone Does anyone have a solution? Please rescue Sister Ning!"

This was the latest message in the group chat.

Chapter 986: Zhang Ye steps in!

The Goof Group.

This should be the coolest chat group that ever existed in the entertainment industry. Almost all of the big shot celebrities were in it, and any one of them could shake up the entertainment industry with just a stomp of their foot. This group was usually just a place for shooting the breeze, but if anyone encountered trouble, they could seek help from the group. Those who could help would definitely try their best as they were always looking out for one another. After all, who wouldn't have times of trouble themselves? These celebrities always seemed like they were doing well on the outside, but there were still times they were vulnerable and needed to band together.

"Does anyone have a solution?"

"Old Ning, you guys must control yourselves, you can't clash with them. Those people from the martial arts world are not to be trifled with. Every single one of them is very skilled."

"Who here can speak with the Lian Family?"

"Is there anyone else online?"

Ning Lan's social ties within the industry were very good. Whenever her friends approached her for a guest role as a supporting character, she would always agree without hesitation and help out wherever she could. So as she ran into today's

problem, everyone was very concerned for her.

Reading this, Zhang Ye could no longer "play dead."

He sat up in bed and typed: "Are Beijing TV's people there yet?"

It was Zhang Ye?

The people in the chat group were taken aback by his appearance.

Everyone already knew about the conflict between Zhang Ye and Jiang Hanwei. But no one expected that the two of them would appear in the group chat at the same time.

Ning Lan immediately said: "Are you referring to the program team of King of Masked Singers? They're here too. They arrived shortly after us and got detained as well."

Zhang Ye frowned. "They were detained too?"

Ning Lan said: "The Lian Family Style's people probably thought that they were also part of our group."

Zhang Ye made a noise in understanding. "Then I'll make a trip there."

Ning Lan: "You're coming over right now?"

Zhang Ye: "I'll head over straight away!"

Chen Guang asked: "Zhang'er, why are you going over there?"

Xiaodong said in surprise: "You can help them out, Teacher Zhang?"

Zhang Ye said: "We'll see when I get there." Then he said to Ning Lan: "If that group of people tries to do anything to you guys, just mention my name!"

Ning Lan was stunned. "Mentioning your name will work?"

Zhang Ye said: "Probably."

Ning Lan: "OK, I'll wait for you. Thank you so much."

Zhang Yuanqi reappeared and asked Zhang Ye: "You can resolve things?"

Zhang Ye said: "More or less. I'm certain I can bring everyone and the equipment back safely."

In truth, no one understood how Zhang Ye could have any influence over Lian Jia Gou. Even for a martial artist like Jiang

Hanwei, the Lian Family Style was not willing to give him any face at all! And you're talking about mentioning your name?

Xiaodong was still quite worried, so she sent Jiang Hanwei a private message.

Xiaodong: "Uncle Jiang, is there really no other way?"

There was a moment of silence from the other side.

Then Jiang Hanwei replied: "Didn't that Zhang guy say he was going?"

Xiaodong: "What use would it be even if Teacher Zhang goes? With that bad temper of his, what if he ends up fighting with them when he gets there? That would blow things up even more. All of those people know martial arts, and if they really beat up Teacher Zhang to a pulp, then..."

Jiang Hanwei said: "Beat him to a pulp? That would be so wonderful."

Xiaodong didn't know how to react. "Uncle Jiang."

Jiang Hanwei pondered for a moment. "Hur, the problem is that they'd have to be willing to act."

Xiaodong didn't understand. "Eh? What do you mean?"

Jiang Hanwei did not bother explaining. "Nothing."

At home.

Zhang Ye immediately rose out of bed and got dressed.

His mother asked, "You're up? Do you want breakfast?"

"I can't eat now." Zhang Ye said helplessly, "My coworkers ran into some trouble, so I have to go take care of it."

At this moment, a call from Beijing Television arrived.

It was Hou Ge. "Teacher Zhang, we ran into some trouble at Lian Jia Gou."

Zhang Ye grunted. "I heard about it."

"You've already heard about it?" Hou Ge was surprised.

Zhang Ye asked: "Is Brother Hu there too?"

Hou Ge said: "Yeah, all of us have been detained here."

Zhang Ye said: "Tell everyone to wait for me to get there."

Hu Fei had asked him yesterday to go with them to film the promotional video for the show, but when Zhang Ye heard that they were going to one of the martial sect's training halls, he turned him down. He didn't expect that he would still have to make a trip there in the end.

Zhang Ye went out, got in his car, and drove straight for Lian Jia Gou.

...

Later that morning.

10:30 AM.

Zhang Ye drove very fast at a high speed all the way and reached the location in no time at all. He got out of his car and asked for directions before striding off.

Before he even got there, he could hear bickering.

At the grounds.

A film crew and a program team were surrounded by a group of people. Ning Lan's film crew consisted of around 18 people, while there were less people from the Beijing Television team, numbering only around 12 people. Actually, the Lian Family Style's

people who had surrounded them numbered between 20 and 30 people and were roughly equal in numbers to them. They were all wielding club-type weapons. But Ning Lan, Hu Fei, and the others did not risk leading everyone else to break through because they knew their opponents were all martial artists.

The Lian Family Style was absolutely not a small sect in the Chinese martial arts world. Their master had appeared on a Central TV science show several years ago, during which he performed his kung fu in the presence of an audience, and was recognized as a genuine martial arts master. Although their grounds and some of its facilities were made available for lease to the public in recent years to supplement their income, the Lian Family Style School was still the same old illustrious but reclusive sect of the Chinese martial arts world. Even if their opponents amounted to just ten people, Ning Lan and the others would still be unable to overpower them in a fight, much less force their way out!

A person on the film crew said, "Return our equipment to us!"

Furious, a Lian Family Style unarmed specialist said, "In your dreams!"

That person on the film crew fumed, "We've apologized to you guys already. We understand that we were in the wrong as we did not know about the history of the Heavenly Rock, so how can you guys handle things this way? Just what do you people want?"

Ning Lan tugged at that person on the film crew. "Director Wang, let's refrain from saying too much."

Director Wang said angrily, "But they're really taking this too far!"

The Lian Family Style disciples shouted, "We'll talk about this when our master gets here!"

One of the Lian Family Style disciples said, "Before our master gets here, no one is to leave!"

Hu Fei was also getting irked. "Do you people know how to act reasonably?"

Hou Ge said in frustration, "What does any of this have to do with us? Why are you surrounding us as well?"

The Beijing Television team had really gotten themselves embroiled in an unfortunate series of events today. They had only just arrived and bumped into the film crew that was filming a movie here. As some of them knew each other, they went over to greet the film crew and chatted happily for a while. After all, they were by and large from the same industry, and it was only polite to greet each other when they met. But who could have known that something would happen right at the next moment? Hu Fei, Xiao Lu, Dafei, and the others had all been surrounded from morning until now, deadlocked for the past few hours!

The police were also here.

Several of the local police officers were trying to smooth things over. "Forget about it and just let it slide, Master Chen. They've apologized to you all and even offered compensation. You can't keep them here forever, right? There has to be an end to all this."

There was an unarmed specialist surnamed Chen who practiced the Lian Family Style.

Master Chen seethed, "The Heavenly Rock was handed down by our Lian Family Style's ancestral founder. It's the symbol of our sect! It's just as important as our name! They should have just stuck to their filming. We leased the place to them, so we wouldn't have kicked up a fuss as long as they did not damage anything. Besides, we even fenced the area around the Heavenly Rock! There was also a warning sign in place! Yet they had to step on it! That's the same as stepping on our heads! Can we take that lying down? Huh?"

"Senior Bro, let's not wait for Master to get here!"

"Right, let's beat them up before talking!"

"This is so infuriating!"

"Beat them up!"

"Smash their equipment!"

The Lian Family Style disciples were whipped into a frenzy!

When the film crew heard that the disciples were going to smash the equipment, they got worried. "Don't you dare!"

The digital film was inside the cameras!

If they got smashed?

That would be a huge problem!

Meanwhile, the Beijing Television team was also having none of it as their equipment was also being confiscated!

Hu Fei said, "What are you people trying to do? What are you doing?"

Hou Ge and Hou Di each rushed to stand in front of a female colleague to protect them!

The police officers started to look uneasy. "Calm down, everyone, calm down! Don't fight! Let's talk about this without resorting to violence!"

The Lian Family Style's people said angrily:

"What's there to talk about!"

"There's nothing to say!"

They tightened their grips on their weapons!

When Ning Lan realized that things were going badly, and was getting out hand, she remembered Zhang Ye's words. She had no choice but to use this as a last resort. She immediately shouted, "Zhang Ye is my friend!"

Zhang Ye?

Why was Zhang Ye's name brought up?

The film crew was shocked.

The people from Beijing Television were also staring at her in shock!

However, they were made even more slack-jawed by what happened next. When the Lian Family Style disciples heard those two words—Zhang Ye—they looked shaken and were instantly silenced!

Huh?

What was going on?

Ning Lan also didn't expect for those two words to be so effective. She immediately pointed behind her. "These friends are from Beijing TV and are all Zhang Ye's coworkers. He'll be here shortly too!"

Some of the Lian Family Style disciples looked at each other.

Someone stuck their neck out suddenly and gritted their teeth. "So what if Zhang Ye is coming!?"

"It doesn't matter who comes!"

"Right!"

"Don't you people even think about leaving this place today!"

"Even if Zhang Ye comes here in person, he'd still have to..."

Ning Lan sighed.

In the end, it didn't work!

But the next second, a voice abruptly came from behind everyone.

"Even if I come here in person, I'd still have to what?"

Zhang Ye was here!

Ning Lan turned around and said, "Little Zhang!"

Xiao Lu said in surprise, "Teacher Zhang!"

When the Lian Family Style disciples saw him, they all looked like they had just seen a ghost!

Chapter 987: Why are they showing so much respect to Zhang Ye?

Zhang Ye arrived.

The Lian Family Style disciples were cursing on the inside!

Fuck!

What is this Plague God doing here!

Shit!

This is going to be bad!

They were all in a subconscious state of panic. Although they had not participated in the recent Tianshan Martial Arts Conference, how could they not have heard of Zhang Ye's notoriety!

Hou Ge, Hou Di, and the others immediately ran up to him.

"Teacher Zhang!"

"You're here?"

"They've confiscated all of our station's equipment!"

"What is this! Tell me what this is!"

Han Qi and Xiao Lu stamped their feet angrily.

Hu Fei also looked over. "Zhang'er."

Zhang Ye asked, "Is everyone alright?"

Hu Fei furrowed his brows as he looked at the martial artists. He said, "We're alright for now, but they were planning to beat us up because of the argument we had. Even the police couldn't do anything when they got here!"

Zhang Ye said, "I'll handle it."

Hu Fei said, "Be careful."

Zhang Ye nodded.

Ning Lan also came up to him.

Zhang Ye locked eyes with her. As this was their first time meeting in person, they took the opportunity to size each other up.

Ning Lan was worthy of being an A-list movie star. She was elegant and looked very pretty as well. But at present, her clothing

was a bit odd. She was wearing robes in the ancient style. Her sleeve was torn apart at the shoulder, and was even smeared with mud and some "blood." This look was probably required for a scene in the movie.

Ning Lan stretched out her hand. "Teacher Zhang."

Zhang Ye shook her hand. "Sister Ning."

Ning Lan had gone through all kinds of difficulties in the industry. Even though she and the film crew were trapped here and their equipment had been taken away, she did not make a fuss. Instead, she laughed. "As per your instructions, I mentioned your name but it didn't seem to have worked."

She turned around and looked at the Lian Family Style disciples.

Zhang Ye also looked at them. "The Lian Family Style?"

Master Chen, who was the group's leader, wiped the sweat off his forehead and said, "That's us."

Zhang Ye said calmly, "I think I heard someone say that even if I came here in person, I'd still have to do something? That thought wasn't finished, so please go on and finish it."

When they heard that, the disciples immediately fell silent!

The Lian Family Style disciples were instantly dumbstruck and started sputtering!

Zhang Ye stared at them. "You don't even have that tiny ounce of respect for me, do you?"

Respect?

What respect did Zhang Ye command here?

The Lian Family Style disciples had even ignored the police, while the calls from Jiang Hanwei and other people in the industry trying clear up the misunderstanding went ignored as well!

The Beijing Television team could not understand!

The film crew could not understand either!

To them, Zhang Ye was just an A-list celebrity. But then again, Ning Lan was an A-list celebrity too. She was even much more popular than him, yet what use was that? In the martial arts community, they did not care about how famous you were as the two fields were in different domains with basically nothing in common!

However, the Lian Family Style disciples' reaction confused everyone!

There was a moment of silence from them.

Eventually, Master Chen braced himself and stepped forward. He apologized, "My deepest apologies, Master Zhang. My junior martial brothers don't know how to be polite. We didn't mean in that way."

Zhang Ye regarded him. "But it sounded to me like you really meant it that way."

Master Chen gave him a nervous fist and palm salute. "We wouldn't dare."

Ning Lan was stunned.

Hu Fei was wide-eyed and tongue-tied.

Dafei, Xiao Lu, Han Qi, and the film crew were all dumbfounded!

Damn! What was that supposed to mean? What was going on? The Lian Family Style disciples had just been furiously calling to rough them up. But when Zhang Ye arrived, why did they suddenly turn into different people? Why was their attitude toward Zhang Ye completely different from their attitude toward them?!

Zhang Ye pointed to the people behind him and said, "These are my coworkers; Ning Lan's my friend. Before I came over, I told Sister Ning that I would be arriving very soon. I told her that if

there was any trouble, she could just mention my name to you. Oh, but now I've realized that I don't even command that tiny ounce of respect. And you people were even planning to beat them up after they brought up my name? Alright then." He stepped aside to vacate the area, revealing the people behind him. Then he swept his arm toward the film crews. "Make your move. Do whatever you wanted to do."

Master Chen was sweating profusely, and was truly trembling. "You must be kidding. Please don't joke around like this."

Zhang Ye solemnly replied, "I'm not kidding."

Master Chen wiped at his sweat again.

None of the Lian Family Style disciples ventured out!

Make our move?

Rough them up while you're standing right here?

Fuck, we haven't lived long enough yet!

Before Zhang Ye's arrival, they could have done anything they wanted, such as scolding or beating them up, and no one could have said anything against that. That was because the Lian Family Style had the right to do as they wished since it was the film crew who offended them first. Even the police would not be able to interfere. This was similar to how the ethnic minorities had their

own rules, culture, and traditions. You couldn't just go about doing whatever you wanted and not respect their rules while in their territory. But now that Zhang Ye had come personally, they knew that they couldn't back up their bluster. With Zhang Ye's status in the martial arts community, if they did not show him this basic respect, then it would be their Lian Family Style who did not observe the rules. Of course, the crux of the matter was that even if a few dozen of them combined their strength, they still wouldn't be a fucking match for him! Beat them up? That would be as good as digging their own graves!

Zhang Ye said calmly, "I already know the issue. Whatever my friends here were in the wrong about, they've apologized and offered compensation. Or maybe you people could request something you need since they were at fault. There would be no argument against that!" Zhang Ye had always been a reasonable man. "But wouldn't beating them up be going overboard? A bunch of martial artists bullying a group of powerless people? There are even women among them! Are you not ashamed of yourselves?"

The Lian Family Style disciples were afraid to utter a word, but neither did they have an excuse!

Zhang Ye immediately said, "If you feel that their apology was not good enough, I will apologize to you all on their behalf since they are my friends." He then cupped his fists and bowed.

Master Chen went to stop him, flustered. "Please don't, please don't!"

Another Lian Family Style unarmed specialist hurriedly said,

"There's no need to do that!"

"This isn't your fault," a female unarmed specialist also said hurriedly. "Master Zhang, there's really no need for you to do that!"

They could not accept Zhang Ye's apology, nor did they deserve it!

But with Zhang Ye showing his sincerity, much of their anger had dissipated. They suddenly felt that Zhang Ye was not as unreasonable as the rumors going around the martial arts community made him out to be.

All of a sudden, they heard footfalls coming from behind them.

Another person had arrived!

It was a middle-aged man who was bald. He looked very tough but had quite a tender air about him.

The Lian Family Style disciples instantly extricated themselves!

"Master!"

"Master!"

"Master!"

The man of the hour had arrived!

It was the Lian Family Style's master of the current generation!

The film crew and the Beijing Television team were subconsciously nervous. When the master arrived, they thought there would be another twist of events. If the other party decided to be unreasonable, they would still be unable to leave this place. Yet somehow, the next development made them once again unable to react!

Zhang Ye looked at him and gave him a fist and palm salute.
"Master Lian."

The master of the Lian Family Style also looked at Zhang Ye. he gave a fist and palm and salute and said, "Master Zhang. A rare guest."

Zhang Ye said, "I'm here to resolve things for my friends and coworkers. They are just common folk and do not know your rules. If they did anything wrong, let me apologize on their behalf."

The master of the Lian Family Style refused to accept his apology as well and replied, "There's no need, Master Zhang. I've already been informed about the matter. The Heavenly Rock was handed down by our Lian Family Style's ancestral founder, and holds a great deal of significance to our Lian Family. But you are right; we

cannot blame the ignorant. In reality, it's no big deal. Besides, how can we not show you respect, Master Zhang?"

Zhang Ye said, "Then allow me to thank you on behalf of my friends."

They could refuse to give face to Jiang Hanwei.

But they could not afford to snub Zhang Ye!

In the martial arts community, Jiang Hanwei's status was on a completely different plane from Zhang Ye's. Jiang Hanwei was a former disciple of the Huashan Sect, so even if he were an expert martial arts master, a former disciple was still a former disciple. His background was already tainted by that fact. Furthermore, some things that happened back at the Huashan Sect all those years ago had given some people in the Chinese martial arts world a bad impression of Jiang Hanwei.

But Zhang Ye was different. First, his kung fu skills were out in the open for all to see. He was someone who had previously forced a draw against a grandmaster. In the entire Chinese martial arts world, Zhang Ye was without doubt the strongest person below the grandmaster level. With his superb kung fu, even if those present today and the master of the Lian Family style were to gang up on him, the few dozen of them would still not be a match for Zhang Ye. Second, Zhang Ye's identity as the successor to the Taiji Fist that had been lost for over a hundred years was held in very high esteem within the martial arts community. It had a whole other meaning altogether. Third, Zhang Ye had recently barged into the grounds of over a dozen large sects in succession and took them all

down with astounding ease. Almost all of the sects of the Chinese martial arts world that could be counted as large had their plaques smashed by him. Even the Shaolin Monastery and Huashan Sect had suffered Zhang Ye's violent wrath. Other than him, there was no one in the martial arts community with such a reputation. Even today, his legend was spreading throughout the martial arts community! However, even though there were many people denouncing him, as long as they did not have a blood feud with Zhang Ye, they would still prefer to avoid someone like him as much as possible.

Afterwards.

The master of the Lian Family Style glanced at his disciples and reprimanded, "Master Zhang is a guest, but you're all holding clubs. Is this the way we treat our guests?"

When the Lian Family Style disciples heard this, they hurriedly put down their weapons.

"We're sorry, Master."

"Uh-huh."

"Our apologies, Master Zhang."

Since they were being courteous with him, Zhang Ye also behaved politely.

Zhang Ye said, "We should be the ones apologizing instead."

An employee from the film crew was also quite enthusiastic to smooth things over. He came forward and said, "I'm sorry, Master Lian. We really didn't know the story behind the Heavenly Rock. We'll be sure to take note of it from now on. Tell us if you require anything for the training hall, or we could also fork out some money to help you renovate the place? It looks like quite a few of the structures are getting worn down."

The master of the Lian Family Style waved it off and said, "There's no need for that. Since your side has apologized, consider things resolved. There's no need to bring it up again. Besides, Master Zhang has come all the way here, so how could I ask you all for compensation?" Then he turned around and said to his disciples, "What are you doing still standing there? Return their equipment!"

"Yes!"

"Yes, Master!"

Master Lian beckoned to Zhang Ye and said, "Shall we have some tea inside, Master Zhang? This way, please."

Zhang Ye also gesticulated. "You first."

The two of them went inside to the innermost room.

They left behind a group of dumbfounded people who were unable to accept what had just happened before their very eyes!

Master Zhang?

When did Zhang Ye become a master?

What the fuck was that salutation?

In addition, why was the Lian Family Style's people willing to show this much respect to Zhang Ye?!

Chapter 988: Martial Arts Master vs. Martial Arts Master!

In the compound.

Inside the room, the tea had been brewed.

Master Lian swept out his arm. "Please have a seat, Master Zhang."

Zhang Ye said politely, "You first, Master Lian."

"You are the guest, so you first," Master Lian said.

Zhang Ye nodded and dispensed with the niceties. He sat down.

Around them, a few of the Lian Family Style disciples were also present. But they looked quite nervous, or maybe they were being cautious, as they kept their eyes on Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye said helplessly, "Don't be so nervous. I'm just here to resolve things for my friends and coworkers. After I have my tea and finish filming the promo, I'll leave immediately." He knew what sort of reputation he had, so he made clear his intentions to put them at ease. And it was true—he was not planning on causing any trouble today.

The Lian Family Style disciples looked embarrassed.

"It's not that."

"We aren't nervous."

"Yeah, we're not."

"You're an honored guest, so we must show you hospitality."

In truth, what they had just said was totally different from they were thinking!

Not nervous?

How can we not be fucking nervous?!

Over a dozen large sects—such as the Shaolin Monastery, Wudang Sect, Huashan Sect, Kunlun Sect, Emei Sect, Iron Palm Sect, and the rest—with a few centuries of history were all taken down by you. In the entire martial arts community, who would not be on tenterhooks around you? Whose hearts wouldn't tremble if they saw you! For you to appear at our Lian Family Style's grounds today, how can we not be nervous? How big-hearted would we have to be?! Just hurry up and leave already! Leave once you're finished with your business! We are terrified into panic just at the sight of you!

When a junior martial brother of the Lian Family Style was given

a signal to leave by his senior brother, he stole a glance at Zhang Ye before quietly withdrawing from the room and going outside into the training hall.

There were still several fellow disciples inside the training hall who did not know about the events that had occurred outside.

"Eh?"

"Little Junior Bro?"

"How're things outside?"

"Have those people been taught a lesson yet?"

"Where's Master?"

Those disciples all asked about it.

Instead, they witnessed their junior martial brother wildly gesticulate while panting, "Quick, quick, quick! Don't say anything! Just hide our training hall's plaque!"

A senior brother was taken aback. "What for?"

A senior sister said with wide eyes, "Why hide the plaque?"

The junior martial brother gave a bitter smile and said something shocking. "Zhang Ye is here!"

Everyone in the training hall suddenly looked horrified!

"Holy fuck!"

"Why is he here?"

"Heavens!"

"Quickly! Hide the plaque!"

"Hide it! Hurry up and hide it!"

All hell broke loose as every one of them started panicking!

This was what Zhang Ye represented.

His name was dreaded in the martial arts community!

Meanwhile, the people inside the room did not know what was going on outside. Actually, Zhang Ye's attitude was very clear and the issue was considered resolved. Both parties were very courteous to each other. There wasn't much conflict either. However, due to Zhang Ye's notoriety, several of those disciples took things into their own hands by hiding the plaque for safety's

sake. Honestly, though, they couldn't be blamed for being overly cautious as it was always better to be safe than sorry. Zhang Ye's reputation was simply too notorious. As someone who could take the Huashan Sect's plaque and make it into beaded bracelets to give away, they couldn't be blamed no matter how nervous they got!

After three cups of tea.

Master Lian suddenly said, "Master Zhang, I've long heard of your great name."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "My name isn't all that great. It's just infamous."

The Lian Family Style disciples started sweating. Oh, so you know that yourself too, eh?

Master Lian also smiled. "I've long admired the martial arts style of the Taiji Fist. We've heard a lot about the Taiji Fist since my master's generation, but we've never had the opportunity to see it for ourselves. Since you have graced us with your presence today, Master Zhang, and this is a rare opportunity, I wonder if we could exchange a few blows and learn from each other?"

Zhang Ye said, "You're too polite, Master Lian. Of course I don't mind exchanging a few blows with you."

Master Lian was delighted and rose to his feet. "Then, Master Zhang, I look forward to it."

Zhang Ye also stood up. "As do I, Master Lian."

Master Lian instructed, "Clear the room."

They did not go outside as there were too many people out there. Instead, his disciples quickly shifted the teapot, tea table, and assorted aside, then left the room in understanding. They knew full well that they were not allowed to stay behind to view this exchange between the two martial arts masters.

They withdrew.

Inside the room, the cleared space was about five or six square meters. It wasn't big, but it was more than enough.

Master Lian gave him a fist and palm salute. "Please, Master Zhang."

"Please, Master Lian," Zhang Ye said.

...

Outside.

A lot of the Lian Family Style disciples were getting very curious.

Thud. Thump. They had started fighting, and sounds of their exchange constantly came from inside.

"Who do you guys think will win?"

"Our master will win, of course!"

"You really think so?"

"Ahem, I guess our master will probably—"

"There's nothing to guess. It's an 80% chance that our master won't be a match for Zhang Ye."

"It's not an 80% chance, it's a 100% that he won't be a match for Zhang Ye."

"Sixth Junior Bro, why are you praising the enemy and putting down our master?"

"Do you guys really think that other than grandmasters, there's someone who's a match for Zhang Ye?"

Five minutes later.

The sounds of fighting stopped.

When the door opened, Zhang Ye and Master Lian walked out one after the other.

"Master!"

"Master!"

The Lian Family Style disciples looked at them anxiously, wanting to know how it'd turned out.

Zhang Ye said, "I must take my leave and go to my coworkers, Master Lian."

Master Lian said, "If there's any trouble, you can come look for me anytime."

"Thank you."

"Take care, Master Zhang."

"No need to see me out, Master Lian. Goodbye."

Zhang Ye left.

Immediately, many of the Lian Family Style disciples gathered around their master.

"Master!"

"How was it?"

"Who won?"

"Who was the victor?"

Master Lian looked over them. "We drew."

They were shocked when they heard that.

"A draw?"

"Master, you're that powerful?"

"Even Zhang Ye was not your match?"

However, Master Lian shook his head as he looked out at Zhang Ye's retreating, distant figure. He smiled and said, "He did not even use 20% of his strength, while I'd given it my all. He was just giving me face and being polite." He then sighed and said, "Taiji Fist is indeed worthy of its reputation!"

The Lian Family Style disciples fell silent at once!

20% of his strength?

Their master was not even a match for 20% of Zhang Ye's strength?

It was no wonder that he could single-handedly challenge over a dozen large sects in succession!

There were differences between the various grandmasters too. Rao Aimin, for example. She could face two grandmasters by herself for a short period of time without being disadvantaged. Naturally, there were differences between individual martial arts masters as well. Zhang Ye, Yang Shu and Master Lian were both martial arts masters. But even if Yang Shu and Master Lian were to team up to take on Zhang Ye, they might not be able to take more than 30 attacks from him. Whether it was their moves, physical attributes, or their concealed power, the gap was simply too great!

All of a sudden, Master Lian spoke, "Master Zhang's associates are filming a promo today. Help them however you can. Sometimes, we only get to know certain people after we've met them. There's no need to believe the rumors floating around out there. At the very least, I dare say that Master Zhang is not that unreasonable man he was rumored to be."

Was that so?

Was he really?

The Lian Family Style disciples were still skeptical!

Chapter 989: Why are you guys so afraid of him?

Outside.

The people from Beijing Television and the film crew were all busy working.

Their equipment had been returned. Actually, there were not many scenes left for the film crew to shoot. After getting a few more takes, they were finished filming for the day.

"Cut!"

"It's a wrap!"

"Great work, Director Wang."

"You too, Sister Ning."

The film crew started to pack up their equipment.

Not too far away, Zhang Ye was strolling past at this moment.

When the film crew saw him, the director and a few of the managers rushed up to him.

"Teacher Zhang."

"Thank you so much."

"It was all thanks to you."

"Thank you!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Not at all. I had to answer Sister Ning's call for help. Besides, my coworkers were also trapped here. In the name of reason, I had to make a trip here today."

Ning Lan also smiled and said, "If you hadn't come here today, Teacher Zhang, we really wouldn't have known what to do. It seems like only you can earn their respect. Others couldn't do a thing."

Zhang Ye waved it off. "The key is that they were willing to give me face. The truth is that we were in the wrong this time."

The director said, "It was due our crew's negligence. I'm quite sorry about that. We even caused trouble for you and your friends from Beijing Television."

Zhang Ye said, "Think nothing of it. Everything is fine now."

The film crew shouldered their equipment and left one by one.

Ning Lan was the last person to leave. She looked at Zhang Ye. "So it really did help to mention your name."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I just happen to have some influence here. They were also willing to give me face."

"Sure." Ning Lan smiled a beautiful smile, "When I encounter something like this in the future, I'll know what to do. Mentioning your name, Zhang Ye, will be sure to help."

Zhang Ye started and quickly said, "Don't do that. You absolutely must not."

Ning Lan was curious. "What's wrong?"

Zhang Ye said nervously, "In any case, just don't mention my name. I don't have that great an influence."

Mention my name?

You need to know where you are first of all!

It might be alright if it's at the Lian Family Style School or some of the other small sects in the martial arts community. Those places are more than likely willing to give me face. But if you went to the Shaolin Monastery, Huashan Sect, or Kunlun Sect and mentioned my name? Then you'd be trying to die! The issue might have started small, but if you mention my name, the small issue will most assuredly get blown out of proportion!

After a while, Ning Lan and the film crew left in a hurry to get to their next location.

Zhang Ye then went to the Beijing Television team.

They had already begun filming the promotional video and were currently blocking out the scene.

When Hu Fei saw that Zhang Ye had come over, he asked, "You even have influence at this place?"

Zhang Ye gave a wry smile. "More or less."

Xiao Lu grinned and shouted, "Teacher Zhang, you're so cool!"

"Yeah!" Dafei said, "You didn't see what happened just then. It was so dangerous. But after you arrived, the Lian Family Style disciples just stayed silent. What the hell happened?"

"What sort of title is Master Zhang?" Hou Ge was extremely curious.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "It's just a form of address, nothing more."

Since Zhang Ye did not elaborate, no one could puzzle it out. Whatever it was, today's incident had astounded all of them. How

could Zhang Ye have more influence than Jiang Hanwei in the domain of the Chinese martial arts world?

When the police officers standing a distance away were finally certain that there wouldn't be any more trouble, they gave each other a look and had a quick word with the people from Beijing Television before turning to leave. They didn't even greet Zhang Ye. Certainly, they knew who Zhang Ye was. But his reputation with the police was the same as it was in the Chinese martial arts world: It was very notorious! Those two verses of "Shut are the doors for humans, Open is the entrance of a dog cage" and "No matter how heavy the iron shackles clang at my feet, No matter how high you raise the whip" had pushed the police into the public eye a couple years ago. They had nearly drowned in the people's vitriol. Zhang Ye had gone in and out of the police station a few times himself, so he had dealt with the Public Security Bureau on many occasions. As such, whenever the cops saw Zhang Ye, their first reaction would be to stay as far away as possible, since they knew how awful this guy could be!

The shooting for the promotional video began.

Hu Fei asked, "Zhang'er, what do you think about this?"

"It's fine," Zhang Ye said.

Hu Fei asked, "Do you have any suggestions?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I'm just a bystander, don't ask me."

Hu Fei laughed and said, "With you, the director of the number 1 rated TV show in the country, standing here beside me, who else would I ask if not you?"

In the end, Zhang Ye had no choice but to offer some advice. He made a few filming suggestions, but did not say more than necessary. Zhang Ye had high expectations for the King of Masked Singers. After all, it was a show he would be competing in. But that was also why Zhang Ye did not want to get involved in the production too much. He wanted to give it some novelty since his upcoming battlefield wasn't going to be behind the scenes.

Half an hour.

An hour.

The filming followed a packed schedule.

Zhang Ye was observing things from a distance with folded arms.

Some Lian Family Style disciples were also nearby, stealing glances at Zhang Ye from time to time. Some of them looked at him curiously, while some of them glanced at him cautiously. But regardless of what their expressions were, there was always some fear in their eyes. Each one stayed as far away as they could. No one dared to get too near to him.

Many of those from Beijing Television noticed this, and it made them wonder even more!

Xiao Lu could no longer hold it in. When she saw one of the Lian Family Style disciples, she suddenly went up to him and said, "Bro."

"Ah?" The unarmed specialist was startled.

Xiao Lu pointed in Zhang Ye's direction. "Can I ask you something? Why are you guys so afraid of Teacher Zhang?"

The unarmed specialist said in embarrassment, "We're not."

Xiao Lu asked, "Really?"

The unarmed specialist wiped at his sweat. "We're not afraid of him."

Xiao Lu said suspiciously, "Oh, is that so? Then I must have been wrong."

The Lian Family Style's unarmed specialists could only smile bitterly in their minds. Not afraid? How could they not be afraid of him! In the Chinese martial arts world, who wouldn't tremble at the mere mention of Zhang Ye's name? Only people like you who did not know powerful Zhang Ye would dare to speak to Zhang Ye in such a manner. If it were the Chinese martial arts world's people, how many would dare to act rashly in front of him? Even those large sects with a deep-seated hatred for Zhang Ye might not necessarily dare to do so. They were constantly saying they wanted

to denounce Zhang Ye, but how long had it been? Had any of the large sects taken action yet? They only dared to talk big!

...

Heading to the metropolitan area.

On the road.

In the bus, the director was cursing at the cameraman who had stepped on the Lian Family Style's Heavenly Rock. He had been scolding him the entire way back. "What the hell were you thinking?! Didn't you see that they'd fenced it?"

That cameraman looked down at the floor without speaking. He had been quite frightened.

The director snapped, "If Sister Ning had not asked Zhang Ye for help, all of our equipment would've been written off! Someone might've even gotten hurt!"

The cameraman said, "It, it was my fault."

Ning Lan said, "It's over, so let's forget about it, Director Wang."

The director said, "Frankly, however, although Teacher Zhang Ye's reputation in the industry is not too good, but his influence is quite wide."

Ning Lan owed Zhang Ye a rather big favor this time, so she wanted to help him out. She smiled and said, "Why don't we add another character to our movie? And then invite Zhang Ye to play the part?"

The director gave her a wry smile. "Do you think I don't want to? If Zhang Ye had joined the film awhile back, the male lead's role would've belonged to him for certain. But ever since the air pollution documentary scandal, who has the courage invite him aboard? He has offended too many people and those people he offended this time are all...Forget it, there's no point in talking about it. I'm actually quite impressed with Zhang Ye, but being impressed is just that. As a director, I have to be responsible to the company and investors who entrusted me with this movie. I must guarantee that the movie will get shown. If I asked Zhang Ye to join us in his current circumstances, who would be brave enough to show our movie?" He wasn't some famous director. He was just a small-time director who hadn't debuted for too many years. He had to consider what others thought of him.

Ning Lan asked, "Is it that serious?"

The director nodded. "Why else do you think Zhang Ye still can't get any new work even though he's an A-list celebrity? It's because no one wants to risk inviting him."

Well, whatever.

It seemed like she couldn't help him out this time.

And so, Ning Lan did not say more.

Di di di. Suddenly, the chat app on her cell phone beeped with a notification.

When Ning Lan finally checked the messages, she discovered that there were quite a few new messages in the Goof Group. A lot of people had pinged her.

Xiaodong: "Sister Ning, how're things now?"

Fan Wenli: "They didn't hurt you, did they?"

Zhang Yuanqi: "Are you there?"

Huo Dongfang: "Old Ning? Why'd she go quiet? Might something have happened?"

Ning Lan quickly replied in the group: "Thanks so much for your concern, everyone. The problem has been successfully resolved. Everyone is fine, and the equipment was returned to us."

Xiaodong: "Ah? That fast?"

Ning Lan sent a smiley face. "Yep. When Zhang Ye came over, the Lian Family actually gave him face and returned our equipment to us without another word!"

A movie star asked curiously: "Zhang Ye?"

Chen Guang: "Zhang Ye really went over?"

Xiaodong: "They really gave face to Teacher Zhang?"

Ning Lan laughed and said: "Not only that. When he first arrived, those people from the training hall immediately fell silent. Even the Lian Family Style's Master Lian treated him very politely. But as for why, I'm not quite sure either. Anyway, I owe Zhang Ye a favor now and have to find a way to repay him, hur hur."

A lot of the big shot celebrities in the Goof Group had not expected this. Many of them wanted to ask Jiang Hanwei what exactly was going on. That was because, in the entertainment industry, it was Jiang Hanwei who probably had the most ties with the martial arts world, so he should know why. But when they remembered the conflict between Jiang Hanwei and Zhang Ye, they knew it wouldn't be right to ask him. Therefore, they could only assume that Zhang Ye knew someone in the Lian Family since they couldn't think of any other possible reasons.

Chapter 990: The name of Zhang Ye is worth a 150 million!

A few days later.

The promotional video for King of Masked Singers was aired.

The premiere was scheduled for broadcast on Beijing Television on Saturday at 8 PM. When the promotional video was aired, it immediately took the Internet by storm. A lot of the viewers had their appetites whetted again!

"Take off your halo.

"Put on a mask.

"Return to the battlefield newborn.

"A gathering of the strong, no need for names. Fight a fair contest through music.

"A legend needs to be witnessed.

"Perfection can only be achieved through conquest.

"Set off a musical storm with your true power.

"King of Masked Singers.

"I'm coming!"

Impressive imagery!

A surge of visuals amid literature and art!

And then there were the lines that set people's pulses racing!

This promotional video that only lasted for around 40 seconds left everyone with a deep impression!

Widespread discussions started on Weibo.

"It's finally beginning!"

"Every show Zhang Ye produces makes people champ at the bit!"

"The promo was really blood pumping! Take off your halo and put on a mask? So who will appear on the show this time!"

"No one knows. Beijing TV hasn't revealed any names this whole time!"

"I heard that they'll all be A-list celebrities!"

"Are you serious?"

"Any celebrities in the A-list or above are the top names in the country. Will they really shed their identities and put on a mask to verse other competitors? Winning is deserved, but if they lose, that would be so embarrassing! And if they lose to some newbies in the music industry? Then it would look even worse for them!"

"That's why I'm looking forward to it!"

"Do you guys think there will be any movie stars joining?"

"Yes, of course! A lot of movie stars can also sing great!"

"Hahaha, they're crossing over to perform. That's what's most exciting about the show!"

"I really can't wait for this show to start!"

"I've been waiting for a month already! Hurry up and broadcast it!"

"The only regrettable thing is that Zhang Ye is not the host! This is his show, but he ended up getting banned. He couldn't involve himself as the host and executive director! How damned maddening!"

"Dong Shanshan is also pretty good."

"Yeah, I quite like Teacher Shanshan too."

Soon after, a list was published!

King of Masked Singers' crew:

Executive Director: Hu Fei.

Executive Producer: Zhang Ye.

Music Director: Bai Yuanfei.

House Band: Miracle Wheels.

Host: Dong Shanshan.

Guessing Panel Guest Judges: Chen Guang (famous domestic singer), Zhang Xia (famous songstress), Amy (member of popular idol group Spring Garden), Chen Yidong (famous variety host), Yao Jiancai (famous crosstalk comedian), Wang Zhuishu (famous lyricist and composer).

The list was revealed.

The viewers burst into an uproar!

They already knew about some of the people on the list, such as Zhang Ye being the executive producer and Dong Shanshan being the host. But they had never heard any news of most of the other names on the list!

Bai Yuanfei?

Chen Guang?

The Miracle Wheels?

These were all famous people from the music industry!

"Even the Miracle Wheels were invited?"

"How cool is that! They're one of the best bands in the country currently!"

"The music director is Bai Yuanfei?"

"Boss Bai received an overseas music achievement award just last year!"

"Yeah, it was for his work in the development of our country's music industry. A lot of it was to the credit of Boss Bai. He also has very high artistic standards. For him to come and take the role of music director for King of Masked Singers, the show's

professionalism and degree of excellence will be elevated to another level!"

"Why did Chen Guang join as a guest judge?"

"Damn, I was hoping to see Old Chen wearing a mask!"

"Hahaha, Old Chen must be scared and unwilling to take the stage!"

"C'mon! In the music industry, among the male singers, how many people can compare with Old Chen? In terms of singing and popularity, Chen Guang is top-class. Would he even need to participate?"

"Grandma Zhang Xia will be there too!"

"Yeah, there's definitely a need for the presence of a bel canto singer!"

"I like Amy!"

"The one that surprises me most is Yao Jiancai. Hahahaha, Old Yao has actually come to do a TV show too. There's no doubt he did so because of Zhang Ye. It's not like anyone has been able to get him on their shows in the past. I adore Old Yao so much! The crosstalks he did with Zhang Ye were all perfect. They're the perfect duo that appears only once in a century! With him as a guest, the studio atmosphere would surely be enlivened. Hai, if

only Zhang Ye could also be on the guessing panel as a guest judge too. That would make things even more wonderful!"

"They're all big names!"

"This guest lineup is so cool!"

"Wouldn't Beijing TV have spent a lot on this?"

"I don't know, but isn't that to be expected?"

"Has the title sponsorship been finalized yet? How much are they getting for it this time?"

Subsequently, just as the netizens were discussing this, news regarding the title sponsorship of King of Masked Singers was released. This announcement once again set everyone off talking!

After several rounds of bidding, the title sponsorship of the show was won by a very large, domestic beverage corporation! The exclusive title sponsorship fee: 150 million RMB!

"What?"

"How much?"

"Holy crap, 150 million yuan?"

"This is insane!"

"This, this has broken another record!"

"Heavens!"

"It's even more than The Voice?"

"The Voice only got only 100 million for the title sponsorship fee!"

This title sponsorship fee was really too frightening!

When the industry heard about this news, it also caused quite a sensation. Domestically, there had not been any variety shows that had ever sold a title sponsorship for such a terrifying figure. However, when they found out about the details, a lot of the industry insiders could only wryly smile without saying a word. They heard that in the bidding war for the title sponsorship of King of Masked Singers, it was a knock-down, drag-out fight with more than a dozen companies taking part at the beginning. They bid until the end when the three remaining companies were unwilling to give up and nearly even came to blows!

How did it end up like this?

Why was it able to get such a high price?

Even the other variety shows had a lot of big names on their shows. Although the guest lineup could not be compared to the King of Masked Singers' guest lineup this time, they were still quite good. For example, a recent large-scale singing talent show broadcast on Dragon TV had a title sponsorship of merely 50 million RMB. And that was even with all of their invited guests being more popular than Dong Shanshan. But why was King of Masked Singers able to sell theirs for 150 million RMB? How could they do that?

Some people could not understand.

But some clearly understood.

It was probably because of one name.

Not the name of a guest.

Not the name of the host.

And not the name of a participating celebrity.

It was the name of Zhang Ye.

To many advertisers, Zhang Ye's name alone was worth the 150 million RMB! As long as Zhang Ye's name was in the executive producer's role in the crew, they would be willing to spend that

much money!

Since Lecture Room started, Zhang Ye's path in the television industry officially began. Then, he moved on to make Zhang Ye's Talk Show, The Voice, and A Bite of China, proving on more than one occasion his production skills. He was currently regarded by everyone as the best producer in the industry!

The genre of show Zhang Ye worked with?

It didn't matter!

Who would be directing the show?

It didn't matter!

Who would be the host of the show?

It didn't matter!

As long as it was Zhang Ye who produced the show, that was all they needed!

Even a food documentary like A Bite of China that did not have a host could go on to top the nationwide viewership ratings. Moreover, it topped those nationwide viewership ratings over a dozen times in a row, so what else could be more important than him? Zhang Ye's name was the greatest guarantee! Having gone

through the days of not being shown any interest when the idea for The Voice was hatched, and the low regard for A Bite of China before its broadcast, Zhang Ye had shattered people's expectations over and over again. He had now come to this point in time when no one would ever doubt his production skills. To put it plainly, even if this fellow produced a shit show, there would still be someone willing to pay for the title sponsorship and believe that the show would become popular. This was what you called star power.

Therefore, for them to have managed to secure this 150 million in title sponsorship money, other than the advertiser being optimistic about the show and their trust in the appointment of the celebrity guests, more of it was to the credit of Zhang Ye's name! As a show that had yet to be broadcast, it was getting hyped to a ridiculous extent and was being talked about nonstop by the viewers every single day. Together with Zhang Ye's name on it, there was almost no chance for the viewership ratings to do badly. The advertiser was not dumb. With such a channel publicizing their brands, they simply couldn't let such a good opportunity slip out of their hands without a fight. So the title sponsorship fee was naturally pushed even higher!

It had broken all records!

The record for the highest title sponsorship fee for a domestic variety show was once again broken!

Importantly, this was just the exclusive title sponsorship fee. There were still many remaining advertisement spots, so with everything added together, it might even cross 300 million RMB in

total. And this was not yet taking into account the exclusive online broadcast rights fee!

...

After the announcements.

At an industry dinner party.

"Did you hear about the title sponsorship fee for King of Masked Singers?"

"Yes, I did."

"It's insane!"

"This is a good thing. Zhang Ye has broken the record for the title sponsorship fee once again. With the standard raised, it will only get better for future shows, since the general title sponsorship fees across the industry should raise as well."

"Old Li, you're overthinking things."

"Ah?"

"No matter how many times the record is broken for the highest title sponsorship fee, it's got nothing to do with us."

"That's right. A show that our station just made went to lobby for title sponsors with heaps of confidence, but was only offered 10 million RMB in the end. The title sponsors even reeled off a long list of conditions."

"Yeah, it's the same for us too."

"Ai, it's not easy at all."

"Just look at King of Masked Singers. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't jealous of them!"

"There's no point in being jealous. There's only one Zhang Ye around. No one else's gonna get the same treatment as him!"

Chapter 991: The first song has been decided!

Under public attention.

The countdown to the recording of King of Masked Singers begun.

There were three more days.

There were just three days remaining.

...

At home.

On this morning.

Zhang Ye was feeling unwell after getting up from bed. He felt a little dizzy, but was more bothered by a tickle in his throat. However, he did not think much of it. It might have been due to the added pressure in recent days or the long duration that he'd spent practicing that led to him catching a slight cold. He believed that he would recover after taking some medicine.

His mother, who had made prepared breakfast, suddenly said, "Son."

Zhang Ye said, "Ah?"

His mother smiled and said, "I discussed things with your dad yesterday. We're planning to sightsee and vacation in Hainan for a while. The two of us haven't really traveled much all these years."

His father, who wasn't too keen on going, asked, "Are we really going?"

"Didn't we already agree to it?" His mother stared hard at his father.

Zhang Ye found them funny and said, "Go on then. It's good to get out and have some fun."

His mother made a noise in agreement as she looked at him. "Will you be paying for us?"

Zhang Ye replied, "Of course! I must!"

His mother said, "Great, shall we book the tickets then?"

Zhang Ye said, "Go ahead. Go and have fun with Dad. I'll take care of all the expenses."

"Will you be fine staying at home by yourself?" His father was a little worried.

His mother sneered, "Our son is a grown-up. Does he still need you to worry about him?"

Zhang Ye smiled. "Don't worry about me. If I get hungry, I'll order something to eat. I won't starve to death."

His mother said, "We'll be back in a couple weeks. And you better find a job quickly."

"OK, I will," Zhang Ye responded.

His mother was the impatient type, who would act as soon as she made a decision. In that sense, Zhang Ye had inherited a part of her character. After booking the airplane tickets and the hotel, his parents packed their luggage and headed for the capital's airport to catch their same-day, afternoon flight. They left just like that!

At night.

Zhang Ye cooked a packet of instant noodles for dinner, then took some medication for his cold before turning in early for the night.

When Zhang Ye got up from bed the next day, he nearly fell down on the spot. He was feeling a bit dizzy, and his legs were a little wobbly. Only now did he realize that his cold had gotten worse, and that he even had a fever!

Damn!

No way, right?

Why are you chaining me up at this key point in time?

Zhang Ye didn't know what to do. He was scheduled for a rehearsal today at Beijing Television, where he was supposed to discuss the songs with the musicians and the arrangements. But Zhang Ye probably couldn't go anymore in his current condition. So he took The Clown's cell phone and called Han Qi, his liaison, to apply for time off.

Han Qi was very worried when she heard. "Teacher, are you alright?"

"I'm fine."

"We start recording the show tomorrow. This..."

"I'll be able to make it tomorrow."

"You're one of the contestants scheduled for the first round, so it's too late to make any changes at this time."

"I know that."

"Let me visit you. Where do you live?"

"There's no need."

"Th-Then please get some bed rest. It won't make much of a difference to discuss tomorrow's rehearsal."

"OK."

After hanging up, Zhang Ye struggled and crawled out of bed quick as he could. He ransacked the drawers and found a bunch of cold and fever medicine and popped them all in one go before lying back down to sleep. He was hoping to recover from the cold quickly. Otherwise, it would be really stupid if it affected tomorrow's competition.

Many outstanding singers had come to compete on the stage of King of Masked Singers. Although Zhang Ye did not know their names, but when he saw their stage presence and heard their voices, he knew that every one of them was going to be a strong foe. Even if Zhang Ye faced the competition in his best condition, he might not necessarily win, much less if he had to perform when he was down with a cold. He could not even guarantee that he would not be eliminated in the first round, so he was feeling rather anxious!

He had to recover as soon as possible!

If he lost in the first round, and was forced to reveal his identity,

how could he advance in this industry in the future?

But things don't always go as planned. Sometimes, the more you hope something will get better, the more it gets worse!

...

Friday.

On the day of the recording.

The interval between this world's recording of a television show and broadcast was much shorter than Zhang Ye's previous world. Due to having a live audience at the recording studio, it was impossible to keep a lot of news and competition results a secret. They would be leaked to the public. Therefore, in consideration of the possibility that, if the interval between recording and broadcast was dragged on for too long, the show's intended effect would be affected. As such, the King of Masked Singers program team compressed the interval even further by recording the show on Friday and then broadcasting at 8 PM on Saturday. The entire turnaround time was only a day, but even though there was enough time to do it this way, there was no allowance for any problems to arise. Everyone had to be extremely careful and focused, because if there were any recording accidents or problems, they would be unable to get the episode to air on the following day. That would then become a massive problem!

Around 5 in the morning.

It was still dark out.

Beijing Television's King of Masked Singers program team had all arrived.

Inside the recording studio, the entire place had been renovated. Anyone would be astonished once they saw the stage, lighting, studio, and heard the audio system, as they were all the best that anyone could get in the industry. The program team, which secured the 150 million RMB in title sponsorship, had also reinvested a lot of that money back into the show. They were essentially willing to dump any amount of money into it. They would either not make a splash, or they would amaze everyone with their show! Beijing Television's executives were also very cooperative on their part. This was the most important show for Beijing Television this year, without any other shows even coming close. so the station's and program team's efforts were fully concentrated on it!

"Brother Hu, Teacher Sunset Glow has arrived!"

"This early?"

"She wasn't too satisfied with the rehearsal yesterday, so she changed part of the arrangement and wanted to come rehearse with the band one more time. She's already in the second rehearsal room!"

"That's fine. The official recording will begin at 1 PM. Let's hurry and get our preparations done!"

"OK!"

"Understood!"

"Eh, where's Teacher Zhang Ye?"

"He didn't come?"

"He's here. I just saw him come in after getting out of his car when I went downstairs."

"Is that so? But I didn't see him."

"I didn't see him either. Maybe you were mistaken?"

"It was a BMW X5, the car that Teacher Zhang drives."

"Let's not worry about Teacher Zhang for now. The biggest variable right now is Teacher Clown. Where's Han Qi?! Little Han! Has Teacher Clown arrived yet?"

"He's here! Little Han went to bring him here!"

"Has he recovered?"

"I don't know."

"Go and check it out! If Teacher Clown does not make it for the recording, that'd be trouble! There's no way we could find someone to replace him at this time!"

Backstage.

Outside the rehearsal room.

The Clown again arrived wearing his mask. No one saw when he came in either. When Han Qi came out to bring him in, The Clown had already changed into his costume. His mask already covered his entire face!

Han Qi said in surprise, "Teacher Clown, you've recovered?"

The Clown was silent for a moment before saying, "I'm...alright."

The moment he spoke, that hoarse and broken voice was immediately unveiled!

Han Qi was stunned. "Sir, your..."

A little while later, the rehearsal room door opened.

When Sunset Glow emerged from inside and saw that man in the

clown mask standing at the door, she was startled for a moment before giving him a smile with her eyes from under the mask. She had heard The Clown singing those working class songs in the video clips and was also extremely curious about his identity. She wondered what kind of wondrous song this "50-year-old driver" with a beautiful voice would perform this time, so she tried to explore the enemy's plans. "Teacher Clown, what song did you choose to perform?" she said with a purposely disguised voice, as she did not wish for her true identity to be exposed.

The moment The Clown spoke, she also got stunned.

The Clown said in a hoarse voice, "Haven't...thought of...it yet."

Sunset Glow said, "Your voice..."

The Clown spread his hands. "A...serious...cold."

Sunset Glow immediately said, "Don't talk anymore. The less you can speak, the better. Have you gone to the hospital yet? Did you get a [cortisone injection](#) yet? No, your case is too serious! Even a cortisone injection is useless!"

Han Qi stamped her feet in worry. "W-What can we do now!"

Suddenly, Hu Fei, Hou Ge, Xiao Lu, and the others rushed over. When they heard about the condition of The Clown's voice, their expressions changed slightly for the worse, and everyone fell silent.

Dafei clenched his teeth and said, "Let's get a replacement, Brother Hu!"

Hu Fei said, "How're we to make any changes? It's too late for that!"

Xiao Lu exclaimed, "This is bad!"

"The show's gonna start recording this afternoon!" Hou Ge was getting anxious.

However, The Clown just looked at them and smiled. He was obviously very sick but his mental state seemed to be much more better than theirs. "I'm...fine. I can still sing."

Han Qi said anxiously, "But how can you sing like that!"

The Clown ignored her and went straight into the rehearsal room. "Let's...rehearse—" A coughing fit consumed him.

When he walked in, everyone looked at him and found that his footfalls were a little light and swaying!

When the Miracle Wheels' band members saw him, their hearts pounded.

The music director, Bai Yuanfei, immediately came forward. "Are

you alright?"

The Clown smiled. "Yes."

Bai Yuanfei nodded. "Then, let's rehearse."

The Miracle Wheels' drummer said, "How can you sing in that state? You'll definitely be eliminated even if you insist on singing!"

The guitarist sighed and said, "You sing bel canto, The Clown, but you can't possibly sing—"

"Pop...songs or rock, I can...sing them all," The Clown said.

The guitarist said, "You really can't sing like this!"

The Clown said staunchly, "Even if I can't...I must!"

Lose?

Elimination?

Zhang Ye was not afraid to lose. If he really lost, so be it. He was not a sore loser. But what he couldn't accept was that he did not even have the courage to get onstage. Having worked for so long in the industry, what sort of difficulties had he not encountered? What calamities had he not been through? He could lose, but even

if he lost, he still wanted to lose while standing onstage!

This was who Zhang Ye was!

He had a bit of the wolf in his bones!

The word "retreat" didn't exist in his dictionary!

When he thought of all this, Zhang Ye suddenly knew what song he was going to sing today. The melody and lyrics of a song naturally surfaced in his mind!

He wanted to tell the audience.

Who he was!

Where he came from!

And where he wanted to go!

Zhang Ye immediately picked up pen and paper and started to write out the song.

When Music Director Bai Yuanfei and the musicians saw this, they were in disbelief.

Bai Yuanfei gasped and said, "Y-You're even thinking of singing

an original?"

Zhang Ye nodded.

The bassist facepalmed and really had to hand it to Zhang Ye. "You're still thinking of singing an original in your current state? This is too hard. Why don't we choose something simpler instead?"

The guitarist also disagreed with Zhang Ye. "Besides, the audience might not even be convinced by it. How many people would accept a song that they've never heard before? How many would accept it after only hearing it for the first time? That's still a question mark. Your voice is already not up to mark today, so if you still insist on taking such a risk, you'll definitely get eliminated!"

But Zhang Ye just looked at them with determination and handed them the score. "My...first...song...must be...this one!"

Chapter 992: A madman!

At Beijing Television.

Behind the closed doors of the rehearsal room.

Guitar strums...

Bass strumming...

A song's melody repeated over and over.

Except there was no singing!

That was because Zhang Ye was no longer able to sing. The condition of his voice had gotten so serious that he had almost lost his voice, though he could still speak. But when he sang, half of his vocalization could not be heard at all! Even so, he still hummed along and tried his best to coordinate with the band.

They finished rehearsing the first song.

Then followed up with rehearsing the second song.

After two hours, the band members and program team staff felt sorry for the sight of the man wearing a clown mask standing onstage who looked like he was on the verge of collapsing.

Bai Yuanfei couldn't bear it anymore. "Alright, that'll do!"

However, Zhang Ye said, "Ba-and, let's do it one more time...."

Bai Yuanfei was fretting over him. "You're already in this state, so don't push yourself! Go to the hospital!"

Zhang Ye waved it off. "I'm fine. Let's try...again." He even got down from the stage to discuss things with the band's guitarist. He pointed out some issues. "I...want...cough...cough...guitar here....I don't want other...instruments." Then he pointed to another part and said with much difficulty, "I will sing...a capella here."

The guitarist hurriedly said, "I got it, I got it. Please...please don't speak anymore!"

Zhang Ye nodded. "Let's do it one...more time. Sorry for the trouble."

Once.

Twice.

And yet again.

This had always been Zhang Ye's way. He set very high standards for himself and would never allow any shortcomings in his pursuit

of the arts. Even in his current poor health, he still had to carry on to the best of his ability.

Bluff his way through?

Make do?

Not pushing himself to the limit?

That was not his style!

Han Qi, who was seated in the audience, unwittingly started to tear up.

The rehearsal ended.

Han Qi quickly rushed onstage to help The Clown down and quickly returned to the waiting room. "The station called for a doctor, who's arrived!"

Zhang Ye nodded. "Thank...you."

Her heart aching, Han Qi said, "Please...please don't speak anymore."

Right after they left, Hu Fei arrived with a group of people!

Hu Fei said in worry, "How was it?"

Bai Yuanfei forced a smile and said, "We're done rehearsing."

The guitarist looked very touched. "I've never come across person as hardworking as him! The healthy competitors only rehearsed two songs seven or eight times yesterday, but he rehearsed two songs 23 times despite being sick! I've really never seen a person like him before! He's really risking his life that way!"

Hou Ge asked, "Can he sing? Will he be able to go onstage?"

Dafei said anxiously, "We're going to start recording very soon!"

Bai Yuanfei pondered for a moment. "Don't worry. He can definitely take the stage. Even if the sky falls, with the type of person he is, he'll remain standing onstage to finish singing before collapsing!"

...

Besides The Clown, the other five singers scheduled for the first round were ready to go.

In the waiting room of Sunset Glow.

Sunset Glow asked, "How's The Clown doing?"

Her liaison sighed and replied, "I heard that he just finished rehearsing, but that he just couldn't make a sound."

"That's such a shame."

Her liaison said, "Yeah, he'll definitely get eliminated."

...

In the waiting room of Petal Shower.

Her liaison asked, "Teacher, how do you feel?"

"I'm feeling great," Petal Shower smiled. "I can't wait to start."

Her liaison said, "That's great then. We'll crush the other singers for sure this time!"

Petal Shower suddenly asked, "I heard that one of the masked singers has fallen sick?"

Her liaison acknowledged, "That's right. It's so serious that he's having difficulty vocalizing. The rules state that two people will get eliminated in each round, so he'll definitely be one of the two today. He might not even be able to finish performing his first song, much less the second."

The other competitors had also heard about The Clown's health and felt that it was unfortunate. Even though they found the songs the man had sung a bit weird, his singing was still very strong. There was no one else who could sing better than him in bel canto. Ordinarily, he would be a very formidable competitor. But now that he had lost his voice after coming down with a serious cold, it was obvious that it would be a fatal blow to him. Whether or not The Clown would be going onstage to perform, his chance at moving on to the next round was as good as gone!

...

In the infirmary.

Zhang Ye was waiting here.

Han Qi said anxiously, "Doctor, please take a look at him, please!"

Zhang Ye was sweating profusely and beads of sweat were trickling down his forehead. No one could see his face underneath the mask, but it was obvious that he did not look good!

The doctor frowned as he made his way over. "Open your mouth."

Zhang Ye did as he was told.

"Say ah."

"Ah."

"Push your tongue down."

The doctor took out a thermometer and placed it into Zhang Ye's mouth. Then he wore his stethoscope and moved the chestpiece around Zhang Ye's chest. At this moment, the thermometer beeped to signify it was done taking his temperature. The doctor retrieved it from his mouth to check.

A fever of 40 degrees!

The doctor looked alarmed!

Han Qi paled a bit as well!

Hu Fei and some others on the program team pushed the infirmary door open and came over. Even Dong Shanshan, who had just finished doing her makeup, rushed over in a hurry when she heard about the emergency over here.

Dong Shanshan asked, "How is he?"

"Doctor," Hu Fei asked, "is he going to be alright?"

Without a second thought, the doctor suggested, "Get a substitute. It's impossible for him to go onstage in this state!"

Hu Fei gasped. "How serious is it?"

The doctor showed the thermometer at them. "He has a fever of 40 degrees, a severe viral cold, inflammation of the tonsils, and even has pneumonia symptoms. What say you?"

"What?"

"It's this serious?"

"This..."

"Then he really isn't going to be OK!"

The doctor looked at Zhang Ye and commanded, "The ambulance is just outside. You must immediately follow me to the hospital to get treatment. Don't even think of taking the stage. That is impossible!"

Zhang Ye shook his head and said, "There's nothing wrong...with me!"

The doctor said furiously, "You're in that state and you still say that there's nothing wrong with you? Anyone else who has a fever as bad as yours wouldn't even be able to get out the bed, yet you can still get here for the rehearsal? You even managed to rehearse for over two hours? You don't want to live anymore, do you?"

Only now did everyone realize the shape The Clown was in when rehearsing just now!

They heard a determined voice come from behind the clown mask. "I'm fine."

The doctor said angrily, "Follow me to the hospital right away!"

Hu Fei also knew that this couldn't continue, so he promptly said, "Teacher Clown, you—"

"I can go on. You don't have to say...more," interrupted Zhang Ye.

The doctor lost his temper and shouted, "You can't even stand straight right now! And you have nearly lost your voice! Go onstage? What stage!"

Zhang Ye looked at him. "Give me...a cortisone shot!"

The doctor said, "An injection probably won't improve your health!"

Zhang Ye said weakly, "Give me...shot!"

He was frequently losing his voice when speaking now. As a result, there were some words that didn't even come out. It made

his speech sound a bit broken, Although, everyone still understood what he was trying to say!

"Teacher Clown!"

"You..."

Zhang Ye waved his hands to stop them from talking!

The doctor gazed into Zhang Ye's eyes. "Are you sure?"

Zhang Ye nodded. "Do it!"

The doctor had no other choice. "Let me tell you this first. As you're in grave condition, if you are injected with corticosteroids, the damage and side effects will be much greater than on others!"

Zhang Ye said a single word, "Understood!"

The doctor grit his teeth. "Alright!" He then turned around. "Don't crowd around in here. Everyone, please go outside."

Hu Fei and the others hesitated, wanting to speak, but eventually left the room.

However, Han Qi did not depart. She stayed behind with Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye loosened his collar some and exposed his neck.

The doctor prepped the medicine and adjusted the dosage.

Han Qi stood right next to him, biting her lip, not saying a word.

Five minutes later.

"Are you ready?"

"Yes."

"I'm going to inject you now."

"OK."

The doctor pinched Zhang Ye's neck and soon started injecting the shot with care.

Zhang Ye's eyelids twitched as he felt a sudden gush of intense pain. He was the type who was most afraid of going to the hospital. Ever since childhood, he would look scared whenever someone brought up "the hospital." As such, he would self-medicate at home whenever he was sick. But this time, he couldn't do that. He needed to have a voice to sing!

After the injection was administered.

The doctor helped massage his muscles.

Awhile later, the doctor asked, "Try to make a sound, please."

Zhang Ye attempted to sing a line. "Land...as pretty as...a picture..."

His voice was still not back!

The doctor shook his head. "It didn't work."

Han Qi hurriedly said, "Forget it, Teacher, just forget it!"

But Zhang Ye put forth, "It's slightly...better! Give me another shot!"

The doctor said angrily, "You think this is an IV drip? We're talking about injecting you with steroids here! Do you know what side effects this could cause? Just one shot is enough to make you suffer!"

"Shoot me up again!" Zhang Ye yelled.

The doctor clenched his teeth. "It's none of my business if something happens to you!"

Zhang Ye said, "Do it!"

A second injection was administered to him!

This injection was even more painful than the previous one. Zhang Ye's hands were even trembling. The pain did not come from being pinched, but rather spread from his throat to his chest!

The injection was done.

Zhang Ye was sweating even more profusely. After he rested for a while to let the steroids take effect, he tried to sing again, "Land as pretty as a...picture!"

It was much better!

But still not enough!

He couldn't hit the higher registers!

Zhang Ye closed his eyes. "Another!"

Han Qi immediately deterred, "No! You absolutely must not!"

Zhang Ye looked tranquil. "Again!"

Han Qi shouted, "Teacher!"

Zhang Ye yelled without any explanation, "Do it!"

The doctor did not argue this time. In silence, he looked at the man in the clown mask, turned around, and picked up the syringe.

Han Qi could not watch any longer. She turned around and ran out after opening the door. Hu Fei had already gone back to the stage to oversee things, but quite a few of the others had remained outside the infirmary.

Hou Ge, Xiao Lu, Dafei, and the others were all waiting there.

"How are things?"

"Can he sing?"

"What're things like, Little Han?"

Han Qi didn't utter a word. She just squatted down and started crying!

"Little Han!"

"You..."

Everyone looked each other in the eye and suddenly felt their hearts grow heavy!

A short while later, the doctor pushed open the infirmary door and came out.

Everyone gathered around him in haste!

"Doctor!"

"Is he better?"

"How is Teacher Clown?"

The doctor scanned the group and proclaimed, "If something happens to him in the future, don't call me! I've treated a lot of celebrities before, as well as given them cortisone shots, but this is the first time in my entire life that I've encountered a madman who's not afraid to die! Just what kind of person has your program team invited this time?"

Chapter 993: The show begins!

In the King of Masked Singers recording studio.

The audience was already seated; the recording was about to begin.

Presently, the first judge walked onto the stage and took a seat, followed by the second one, then the third.

"Wow, it's Chen Guang!"

"It's Chen Guang!"

"Grandma Zhang Xia is here too!"

"Hahaha, Old Yao!"

"Why did Old Yao style his hair into a pompadour? Did he grow out his hair?"

"Amy!"

"Amy! I love you!"

"I've finally seen her in person!"

The recording did not begin yet. Yao Jiancai and Chen Guang were both smiling and waving at the audience.

Amy was chatting with Zhang Xia. The two other judges, Chen Yidong and Wang Zhuishu, were also sharing a laugh, discussing the competition that would be taking place soon. It was not just the audience who was looking forward to the start of this show; even the judges were greatly anticipating it as they did not know who the participating masked singers were. Would any of their old friends be competing on the show?

At this moment, Dong Shanshan, who was dressed in a women's suit, stepped onto the stage. Her fashion today was different from before. She not in her usual sexy short skirt or long dress. Instead, she was dressed in a more gender-neutral, more conventional petite suit today, with her hair up, and even wore a pair of golden-rimmed glasses. This style had completely changed her air, and was in consideration of the show having only one host, so it would be unsuitable if Dong Shanshan dressed in the way she used to. That wouldn't help her solidify her stage presence, as the clothes of a host had to befit the stage. All such details were carefully observed in their production.

Quite a few of the male audience members started screaming.

"Shanshan! She's so beautiful!"

"She looks really pretty in those clothes!"

"Yeah, it really suits her nicely!"

"She's got class!"

The atmosphere in the studio was heating up!

The staff were doing their final preparation work in the recording studio.

Hu Fei made last checks with his team. "Lights?"

A lighting technician replied, "OK!"

Hu Fei asked, "Cameras?"

"Camera 1 OK!"

"Camera 2 ready!"

"All cameras on standby."

Hu Fei said, "Shanshan, do a mic test."

Dong Shanshan blew into the microphone. "Hello, hello, OK!"

The Miracle Wheels also went onstage. They had done their sound checks earlier and only needed a final confirmation check.

Everything was ready.

Hu Fei nodded and said, "Alright then. All departments, take note. The one-minute countdown begins now!"

30 seconds...

20 seconds...

10 seconds...

It was time!

The recording began!

A camera jib crane captured the panoramic view of the studio!

The stage lights twinkled as countless spotlights suddenly focused simultaneously on a door. The door opened up and a woman in a suit, wearing a red mask, slowly walked out. Her high heels clicked with every step she took. In no time at all, she elegantly stood at center stage.

The woman raised her microphone and spoke into it, and a very shrill voice came out. It was obvious that this was being resynthesized through a voice transformer. "Welcome to Beijing Television's Mystery Music Show, brought to you exclusively by

Bright Fruit Cocoa—King of Masked Singers!"

The audience instantly rose from their seats with cheers and applause!

After the advertising messages consisting of a few hundred words were read, the woman turned around all of a sudden and hooked her hand behind her head. By the time she turned around again, the mask she had been wearing was off. She gently put on a pair of golden-rimmed glasses and exposed her beautiful face to everyone.

"I am your host, Dong Shanshan!"

Her voice was now back to normal!

With this opener, the audience was instantly stoked!

A mask.

A synthesized voice.

The reveal.

This is what King of Masked Singers is about!

At the guessing panel.

Zhang Xia smiled. "Interesting."

Amy clapped. "This is fun!"

Chen Guang's heart was beating very fast. "I'm anticipating this more and more."

Wang Zhuishu laughed. "Old Chen, do you think we'll bump into any old friends here?"

"Definitely," Chen Guang said, "but we may not recognize them."

...

Backstage.

Zhang Ye was hooked up to an IV drip in the waiting room.

Han Qi stayed right beside him and helped him keep the bag aloft.

The recording had already started. In the waiting room was a TV he could use to watch the entire recording.

"You can go back, Little Han."

"No thanks."

"I'm fine, really. Can't you tell?"

"Please stop talking."

"That's why I'm saying you can go back. Come back and call me when it's almost my turn. I would like to rest for a while by myself, that OK? Don't make me talk anymore."

"...Alright."

Han Qi had no choice but to leave for now. She went out and closed the door behind her.

Only Zhang Ye was left in the waiting room. Now, he finally clutched his chest. He could feel a pain in his chest as he took several deep breaths and coughed. He couldn't help but smile bitterly to himself at his current situation. He knew that this was not pain from pneumonia but the acting up of his old injuries. He did not know if it was because of the cortisone shots, or if he had caught a cold this time because of a lowered immunity stemming from his old injuries, or if it was due to the inflammation of his wound, which in turn aggravated his old injuries, but he was feeling extremely uncomfortable right now. His lungs hurt even just breathing!

In the end, he still could not escape from the injuries he'd received during the National Martial Arts Conference two months ago. Initially, he was quite alright. But as those injuries were internal and were received from Grandmaster Chen Xi's concealed

power attacks on him, followed by the concealed power injuries that he suffered when he went on a consecutive rampage against the dozen over large sects, the injuries were there all the while. Injuries like these required time to heal, and they might even kill him if they were serious. Rao Aimin's younger sister and brother-in-law had died a year after suffering internal injuries caused by Zhou Tianpeng's concealed power attacks on them. And it wasn't just him who was affected. Rao Aimin herself carried some internal injuries, while the Huashan Sect leader, Chen Xi, was even worse off. It was rumored that he hadn't been seen in public for over two months. A lot of people had suffered rather serious injuries during that intense battle!

Old injuries.

A cold.

A fever.

This was Zhang Ye at his weakest. It was also the time when he was in the worst shape, yet he was immediately about to take part in the first competition round of King of Masked Singers. Having been thrown into such circumstances, Zhang Ye was forced bite the bullet. Because he was the type of person who never believed in fate!

He wanted to sing.

So today, he wasn't going to let anyone stop him!

...

In the studio.

A smile hung from Dong Shanshan's face, and she said in a steady rhythm, "This singer, the first to make an appearance, has a very clean voice and wide vocal range. Let us welcome—King of Oddity!"

King of Oddity?

What kind of name was that?

Everyone stared at the door curiously.

At the guessing panel, the judges had already started to make guesses.

Chen Guang smiled and said, "King? Of Oddity?"

Yao Jiancai blinked and said, "Could this be Zhang Ye?"

Zhang Xia was tickled pink.

Amy nearly burst out laughing!

Zhang Ye?

Just because there was the word "oddity" in the name, it has to be Zhang Ye?

These two people were indeed long-time partners. All they did was mock each other!

That remark was also picked up by the cameras, but everyone knew that Old Yao was just kidding.

"Wow!"

"He's coming out!"

"That costume is so cool!"

"Oh!"

Dong Shanshan walked away from center stage and stood in a corner of the wings.

The first masked singer came out onto the stage. His mask was quite peculiar, with nearly every color of the rainbow, while the mesh he wore covered his entire head and even hid his neck! He took a few steps forward and stood in the middle of the stage.

The famous variety host, Chen Yidong, said in shock, "How are we supposed to guess like this! We can't even see their hands since

they're wearing gloves!"

Yao Jiancai said, "We can see their socks though."

Wang Zhuishu laughed and said, "Are you going to identify them from their socks?"

Amy was already curiously leaning forward just to get a tad bit closer. "Who could this be? There's not a single clue as to who it is!"

Zhang Xia was also analyzing the singer. "Are they tall?"

The lights abruptly dimmed.

The entire studio quieted as everyone stared at the singer in anticipation.

The music played. A very playful melody rang out!

King of Oddity closed his eyes and started swaying his head. He wasn't nodding to the beat of the music, instead thrashing his head from left to right!

Then, his legs started moving too!

He was dancing to the music, except that this dance looked quite

funny!

His voice immediately came out the moment he opened his mouth to sing!

"Ya ain't doing good.

"But ya ain't sayin' so.

"I think you're,

"Truly an idiot.

"Ya say, ya say.

"I say, I say."

When everyone heard the short rap intro at the beginning of the song, they immediately knew what song this was. It was a relatively popular song in recent years, titled "Idiot," and was originally performed by a female Taiwanese singer. However, King of Oddity's performance of this song differed from the original. The tempo was clearly faster, and there was more [portamento](#) to it!

The first verse of the song finished.

The audience immediately started applauding!

Zhang Xia concluded, "It's a young man!"

Chen Guang said, "Right, he's definitely not above 40!"

Amy solemnly stated, "It's a man."

Wang Zhuishu laughed and looked at her. "I can make that out too, y'know!"

As King of Oddity sang faster, the studio's atmosphere became increasingly lively!

The rhythm was great!

It made everyone tempted to sing along!

Chen Guang evaluated, "This guy is great at performing live. He's probably a professional singer!"

Zhang Xia shook her head. "Not necessarily."

Wang Zhuishu sighed and said, "He sings really well, but who could it be?"

Amy suddenly said with a start, "Aiyo! Could it be that, um, that,

what's his name again?! Qiqi? The Taiwan Music Awards winner?"

Wang Zhuishu denied her. "No. I've written songs for Qiqi before, and this singer's figure does not look like his."

"I think, I think!

"I think, I think!

"Ya are, ya are!

"Truly an idiot!"

The song ended!

Everyone was applauding in the studio!

Amy was also clapping in excitement. "Great! That was great!"

Zhang Xia's evaluation was very high too. "Are there any singers in the industry whose portamento and sense of rhythm are so good?"

Wang Zhuishu said anxiously, "Who could this person be!"

The audience was guessing as well.

"I like him so much!"

"That was really nice to listen to!"

"Is this guy a singer? Or an actor?"

"Are there any actors who can sing this well?"

"I don't know anyone who can!"

"He does sound a little familiar, but I can't remember who it is!"

"Aiyo, I'm so anxious. Please just reveal his face. When does the identity reveal happen? I really really want to know who this guy is!"

"He has to lose before he reveals his face!"

"Ah, then I guess I'd better forget about it."

"The first singer's this good?"

"This is so exciting!"

"This show's better than I'd imagined!"

"Yeah, I initially thought that I could guess their identities as soon as I heard them. Cuz they're all famous, y'know? Shouldn't this be super easy? It was only after I heard them that I realized it was completely fucking impossible to guess who it was!"

"Who's the next singer?"

"Who's next?"

King of Oddity smiled and bowed before leaving the stage.

Dong Shanshan returned to the stage and said, "The next contestant has a very beautiful sounding name and a very beautiful mask. Let us welcome—Petal Shower."

...

Backstage.

There was a knock on the door.

Zhang Ye took a deep breath. "Come in."

Han Qi came in. "Teacher, you can start prepping now. We're on the second contestant, while you're the fifth to go on. We have at most 15 minutes."

Zhang Ye nodded. "OK."

Then he stood up and pulled out the intravenous needle from his arm.

Let's do this!

[In music, portamento is a pitch sliding from one note to another](#). Consider: Glissando is a discrete portamento whereas portamento is a continuous glissando.

Chapter 994: The Clown takes the stage!

In the studio.

"When will the moon be clear and bright?

"With a cup of wine in my hand, I ask the clear sky.

"In the heavens on this night.

"I wonder what season it would be?"

This was Petal Shower's performance of Zhang Yuanqi's song. To be exact, she was singing a song that was written for Zhang Yuanqi by Zhang Ye!

As soon as she started singing, the entire studio audience was in shock!

Zhang Ye could also hear her singing, from the TV in the waiting room. Petal Shower was still singing in falsetto for the entire song. Almost no one else would risk singing that way! This was because the pitch changes while singing in falsetto were too minute and would make it sound too monophonic. A lot of the syllable enunciations in falsetto were not easy to control, in addition. But Petal Shower's vocals and her handling of the technique were very special. Her falsetto was truly different from all others!

This was her absolute killer move!

A few of the guessing panel's judges were also shocked by her performance!

When it was over, Dong Shanshan came onstage together with the first performer, King of Oddity. The three of them stood at center stage and faced the guessing panel.

Dong Shanshan smiled and said, "Judges, what do you think?"

Zhang Xia praised, "Petal Shower's rendition of the song was very good!"

Petal Shower bowed slightly and used the microphone fitted with the voice transformer to say, "Thank you, Grandma Zhang."

Zhang Xia blinked. "You're addressing me as grandma, so does that mean you're quite young?"

Petal Shower said, "Isn't 'grandma' your official title?"

The audience laughed.

Amy was startled and said, "Are you Sister Yuanqi? You're using that falsetto on purpose to throw us off? So that we won't be able to recognize you?"

When Petal Shower heard that, she immediately imitated Zhang Yuanqi's posture and physical mannerisms.

The audience was tickled.

Zhang Xia instantly laughed and said, "You're definitely not Yuanqi. Yuanqi isn't this playful."

Chen Guang looked at King of Oddity. "Do we know each other?"

King of Oddity looked back. "More or less."

Chen Guang asked another question, "Do you have my cell phone number?"

King of Oddity kept silent for a bit. "Yes."

The audience burst into an uproar!

Amy walked over to snatch Chen Guang's cell phone. "Give me your cell phone! I wanna browse through your contacts!"

Chen Guang's hair stood on end. "I want to look through it, but I can't seem to recognize him! There are over a hundred people involved with music in my contacts!"

Next, it was time for the live voting round.

The competition format was divided into two rounds. In the first round, six contestants would face off in separate one-on-one singing duels, with the winners advancing to the next round to fight for the spot of Masked King. Of the three defeated contestants, one would be chosen to be placed on the safe list and remain in the competition while the other two would be eliminated. The eliminated contestants could then either choose to reveal their identities or not do so and just leave the stage. Two contestants would be eliminated per episode. This was how cruel this competition format was!

Dong Shanshan pushed her gold-rimmed glasses up and announced, "Can everyone please pick up their voting devices and vote for the contestant you like most?"

The voting started!

On the big screen behind them, both of the contestants' tallies rose.

There were a total of 500 judges in the studio and a total of 500 votes to be cast.

The audience voted excitedly, their eyes glued to the big screen!

Finally, the tallies stopped!

King of Oddity: 137 votes.

Petal Shower: 362 votes.

One voter abstained from voting. That vote was invalidated!

Dong Shanshan said with a smile, "I hereby announce: The first contestant to advance is—Petal Shower!"

Petal Shower bowed slightly and glanced in the direction of the judges.

Chen Guang was looking right at her. Their eyes briefly met before both quickly looked away.

Dong Shanshan said to King of Oddity, "Let's have King of Oddity proceed backstage to rest and prepare for the next round."

King of Oddity did not show much of an expression. He nodded slightly to the judges and audience before leaving the stage.

Some of the audience members were happy with the result while some were feeling regret.

"I really like King of Oddity!"

"I still think that Petal Shower sang better!"

"Her singing was incredible!"

"This is so fun! This show is much more interesting than The Voice!"

"Hahaha, you can't put it that way. Compared to The Voice, this is a different genre. But I agree that this is super exciting indeed! I'd also like to know where the fuck this group of people who can sing so well jumped out from. Which big names are behind the masks?"

"Petal Shower has to be a big name!"

"That's right!"

Onstage.

The second group's singing duel began.

Sunflower in the Starlight vs. Sunset Glow.

Piercing screams once again rang out in the studio!

"The sun is my name."

"Heaven is my faith."

"The Earth is my refuge."

"Humanity is my enemy."

An amazing voice filled the studio!

...

The Clown was in the studio by now and was waiting behind the door.

Hu Fei deliberately rushed over and asked, "How are you?"

Han Qi hurriedly said, "Director Hu, don't make the teacher speak."

Hu Fei nodded and looked at The Clown. "Just do your best. It doesn't matter whether you win or lose, that's not important anymore. That you've endured til now to go onstage is good enough, honestly."

Dafei also came over. "Yeah. If you can't continue singing, just walk off the stage. That'd be fine; no one would blame you."

The Clown smiled but did not speak.

In truth, none of them knew that The Clown's present health was

far worse than they could imagine. It wasn't as simple an issue as a cold or a fever. He'd been injured by a grandmaster's concealed power attacks, as well as the attacks by the martial arts masters and disciples from over a dozen large sects. Right now, Zhang Ye was very weak physically.

He could hear the roar of the audience from here.

The voting had begun.

"Sunset Glow!"

"Sunset Glow!"

"Sunflower!"

"Sunflower!"

Everyone was shouting the names of the singers they supported!

Zhang Ye, however, was not paying any attention to it. He did not have the energy left to care about the other contestants' results. Just trying to stay standing was already sapping him of all his strength.

Finally, the voting ended!

He heard Dong Shanshan announce, "Let us congratulate Sunflower in the Starlight!"

Sunset Glow had lost, and lost by a very small margin, only a mere dozen votes or so!

At this moment, the recording inside the studio temporarily halted.

Dong Shanshan verified something with Hu Fei through her earpiece.

"Director."

"Yes."

"Is the next contestant able to make an appearance?"

"He's fine."

"OK, I understand."

The audience and judges in the studio looked curiously at Dong Shanshan, unsure of what was happening.

The recording continued.

Dong Shanshan said, "Our next contestant is feeling a little unwell today, but he still insists on coming out to perform. Let us welcome—The Clown!"

The Clown?

Zhang Xia was taken aback.

The audience turned to the direction of the door and clapped enthusiastically!

Behind the door.

Hu Fei said, "You can do it!"

Han Qi, who felt sorry for him, encouraged, "Teacher, you can do it!"

Dafei clenched a fist and held it up. "Come on! Teacher Clown!"

A female employee added, "Hang in there and finish the song!"

"You can definitely do it!" someone else said.

Many people from the program team were moved by The Clown's tenacity and unbending will. They knew deep down that someone who could take three cortisone shots would definitely not be a

normal person. This was someone who wanted to get on stage even if it risked his life! They did not know why this person went so far to do this, why he was so hungry for the stage, why he did not fall even though it was clear that he was already on the verge of collapse!

The light came on!

The door opened!

Zhang Ye touched his mask and then walked forward slowly, step by step. The closer he got to the stage, the more determined his steps became!

Applause rang out again!

"Wow."

"That's a really nice mask!"

"The Clown?"

"What's with the way he's walking?"

"Is he really that sick? Why's he still pushing himself to go on stage then!"

"Man, it seems like it's really quite serious!"

"Can he even finish singing one song in that condition?"

"I don't know."

When the audience saw him, they started whispering. Some of them even pointed in the direction of the stage.

The person wearing the mask of a clown was taking a long time to walk the 20-odd meters to the center of the stage.

Zhang Xia frowned. "Can he really do it?"

Chen Guang said, "I heard that he has a fever and a very bad cold."

Amy was taken aback. "Ah?"

They were also singers and had encountered such situations themselves. They knew exactly what it felt like to sing in such a state, and judging from this person staggering onto the stage, it didn't look like it was just a simple case of a fever and bad cold!

Chen Yidong said, "This is going to be difficult for him."

Wang Zhuishu said, "Let's hope he can persevere to the end of the

song."

In each of the waiting rooms, the other five contestants were watching him on TV.

At the center of the stage.

Zhang Ye finally reached it and stood there. He gently closed his eyes.

The lights shut off!

The studio quieted down instantaneously!

The notes of a flute suddenly drifted across the studio.

It was followed by a few notes from a piccolo.

The music started, but Zhang Ye did not move nor did he open his eyes.

Persevere to the end of the song?

He had been hearing similar words countless times since he'd made his way here from backstage. Did you guys misunderstand something? Do you think that I took three cortisone shots and came here carrying my old injuries just because I wanted to finish

singing the song regardless of whether it was good or bad? Not only will I finish singing it, I will sing it well too!

So what if I lose my voice?

So what if my old injuries have acted up?

Those are not reasons!

I won't look for any excuses, and I don't need anyone's pity. All this while, I've walked alone, by myself. So I cannot falter here. Because I know that if I did, no one would help me up. As such, I can only keep walking, onwards and onwards, to the place I want to reach—this is probably the reason why I'm standing here!

The dazzling lights were shining from every direction!

The cameras were aimed at him.

The audience was watching him.

The guessing panel was watching him.

The other five contestants were watching him.

Beneath the mask of The Clown, a pair of eyes opened without warning. That sorrowful and hoarse voice from under the mask

suddenly resonated through the entire studio!

"I am a wolf that comes from the north.

"Padding through the boundless wilderness.

"The mournful northern wind blows by.

"The slow sand brushes by."

Chen Guang was stunned!

Amy froze!

Zhang Xia was shocked!

What song was this?

Why hadn't they heard this song before?

A wolf?

A wolf that comes from the north?

Zhang Ye had already thrown his entire self into the song. He was not performing with the spirit of aloofness that the original

version of "[Wolf](#)" had. He was using his imperfect voice to sing who he was right now! A wolf, an injured wolf! An injured wolf that still wanted to move forward!

Zhang Ye raised the microphone.

"I can only clench my cold, cold teeth!

"Respond with two long howls!

"Not for anything else!

"But for the beautiful plains found in legends!"

This was the portrayal of him today!

It was also the portrayal of him after several years in the entertainment industry!

He was tired!

He was scarred and wounded!

But he had to keep walking!

Amy was mesmerized!

Zhang Xia was dumbstruck!

Meanwhile, Chen Guang had his eyes firmly fixed on him as though he wanted to rush onto the stage to take off the mask and find out who he was!

Mournful!

Wintry winds!

Clench your cold, cold teeth for the beautiful plains found in legends?

The plains that you have in mind...What are they like? Is it worth pushing yourself to stand onstage in that condition and sing with that hoarse voice of yours?

Even Yao Jiancai, a music industry layman, was moved!

The judges all knew that this man must have a story to him. However, no one other than him would know what this story was or understand it!

Zhang Ye sang on, his eyes drooping heavily.

"I am a wolf that comes from the north.

"Padding through the boundless wilderness.

"The mournful northern wind blows by.

"The slow sand brushes by.

"I can only clench my cold, cold teeth.

"Respond with two long howls.

"Not for anything else!

"But for the beautiful plains found in legends!"

All of a sudden.

The Clown faced the sky as he howled.

"Awoooooo!"

He was mimicking the call of a wolf!

This sustained howl lasted for a good nine seconds!

The studio atmosphere was instantly raised!

Chen Guang stood up. This was the first time he'd done so today while listening to a song being performed!

Amy did not stand up, though she did clutch her head and exclaim, "Oh my god!"

Zhang Xia was beyond curious. "Who on earth is this!"

Zhang Ye simply stopped caring about the state of his voice. Cracking? Trembling? Unable to hit the high notes? Breaking? Loss of voice? He did not care about any of that! The thought of not being able to continue singing or his voice suddenly disappearing did not even enter his mind!

"Not for anything else!

"But for the beautiful plains—found in legends!"

Chapter 995: The Clown wins!

The music stopped!

Applause rang out from everywhere!

Many of the audience members were fired up!

"That song's unbeatable!"

"It's too damn nice to listen to!"

"Could that participant be Chen Guang?"

"Pfft, Old Chen is sitting right there at the judges' panel!"

"Then how can his singing be this good! And that song was so amazing. It sounded like it was specially written for the condition that he's currently in! Which entertainment company is this big shot from?"

"I don't know!"

However, there were also those who were not convinced by his performance.

"The song was alright, but his voice is terrible."

"Yeah, his singing wasn't good."

"In any case, I don't feel it."

"Was his singing good? I don't think so."

"Maybe it's because it's my first time listening to the song, but I didn't feel anything special. I still think that the previous singers sang much better, and that this guy's singing isn't good enough."

No single work could appeal to everyone.

The audience had many differing opinions regarding The Clown's performance.

But there were only cheers from the judge panel.

Chen Guang shouted, "Great!"

Amy clapped with all her might. "Fantastic!"

"Is there such a person in the music scene?" Zhang Xia was also getting very excited.

Yao Jiancai liked the song very much as well. "Who is it!"

Chen Yidong glanced to his side. "Even if Chen Guang went onstage with a serious cold, he wouldn't necessarily sing better than him, right? He was already greatly disadvantaged by losing his voice due to the cold, but The Clown has infused that greatest flaw in his singing into the song. I must admit that it made the entire performance just spectacular!"

Chen Guang said frankly, "I definitely can't sing as well as him. At a concert three years ago, I sang while I was down with a cold and it turned into a hell of a mess!"

Wang Zhuishu nodded and said, "Still being able to sing this well even after the voice has been affected by a cold, there shouldn't be too many people in the music industry who can achieve something like this!"

They were all left guessing!

Yet they didn't even know where to start guessing from!

...

Backstage.

In King of Oddity's waiting room.

King of Oddity looked at the producer in the room and pointed at the TV. He said, "Are you sure this guy was the one who sang that 'as a fifty-year-old pro driver, I am all smiles' song?"

The producer gave a wry smile and nodded.

King of Oddity was floored!

Damn!

I really believed that you were a bel canto singer!

How did I fall for your nonsense!

...

In Sunset Glow's waiting room.

Sunset Glow got the goosebumps listening to the performance.
"That was a really good song!"

So this was who the real Clown was!

So this was what his true style of singing was!

This fellow had indeed just been putting on an act back then!

...

Onstage.

The man in the clown mask lowered the microphone, bowed slightly, and turned around before walking slowly offstage. Before he could leave the stage, Han Qi and two Beijing Television employees were already running over to support him. But The Clown waved them off by gesturing that he did not need any help.

He had finished singing.

This song was called "[Wolf](#)" and was performed by [Chyi Chin](#) in his previous world.

Zhang Ye felt very good and mustered up an exhausted smile. He felt that even if his voice was at its best, it wasn't likely that he could have performed the song better than he had. He did not know how the judges felt or how the audience would judge him, but he was very satisfied with it himself.

In the wings.

Han Qi was going crazy. "Teacher, you sang so well! It was so good!"

Zhang Ye said, "Thanks."

Dafei also came over after being astonished by what he heard. He even said with some disbelief, "You could still sing that well even with your voice in that state? If there weren't any problems with

your voice, how well would you have sung?"

Onstage.

Dong Shanshan spoke, "Next, let's invite today's last contestant, who has a very tough-sounding name. Let's welcome—The Yak!"

Zhang Ye had seated himself near the stage.

As he still needed to go onstage in a little while, he did not return to the waiting room.

The Yak appeared from the other side of the stage.

The Yak wore a cow mask, with horns, and looked very cute.

This was Zhang Ye's opponent this round.

The audience applauded!

Awhile back, Zhang Ye had listened to The Yak's performance on some video clips. His evaluation of him was that his singing was not bad, but it was only at an average level. He should be considered the one with a weakest singing among all the others in the first round. But since this was a competition, nothing was decided until the very end. No one knew who might suddenly decide to show their prowess and light up the venue. In the music industry, singing did not mean everything as it was only a

foundation for success.

The stage lights shut off.

The performance began.

"Deep emotions, as water, like smoke.

"Bring me before your very eyes.

"You are drifting between the clouds."

Although the Yak was named The Yak, the song he performed was rather emotional and did not match the mask, which had a wild look with a hint of cuteness.

"I don't know where you came from.

"Nor am I clear 'bout where you're headed.

"The flames of passions.

"Whoosh. Extinguished."

The song he was singing wasn't incredibly mainstream, but it was still very nice to listen to and a treat to hear. An adult man in a yak mask singing a love song was a stark contrast and also quite

eye-catching.

All of the people's attention was on The Yak.

Even Han Qi and the program team staff watched with interest.

Meanwhile, no one noticed that Zhang Ye was sweating even more profusely now. Even though he was sitting in a chair, he was already struggling hard to hold it together. He wasn't listening to The Yak's performance anymore. He had opened up the game ring's inventory to retrieve a Stamina Potion instead. This was an item he had received a long time ago. There were still over a dozen bottles left in the inventory. Back when he was working overnight to help Beijing Television with their Quit Smoking PSA, he had depended on this potion to help him pull through the night. Now that Zhang Ye was unable to hold himself together for much longer, he had no choice but to chug a bottle of it.

The potion took effect very quickly.

Part of his stamina was immediately restored. He could sit straight at least.

The Yak was coming to the chorus of the song when a mistake was suddenly occurred. His falsetto cracked but he recovered from it very quickly.

What kind of singing performance was the most difficult?

A live performance was the most difficult! Because you never knew what might happen, and you could never redo things. Be it good or bad, you only had one chance!

The song ended.

The performance finished.

The audience members were still very absorbed in the performance and were applauding enthusiastically!

"Great!"

"That was so touching!"

"This guy has a very identifiable voice!"

"Great song! It was really nice!"

Of course, there were also some in the audience who thought that it just an average performance.

Dong Shanshan reappeared onstage. "Alright, let's invite The Clown back onstage."

A moment later, The Clown returned to the stage and stood with The Yak, each on either side of Dong Shanshan.

Dong Shanshan smiled and said, "Judges? If you were to vote, who would you vote for?"

Zhang Xia grabbed the opportunity. "Let me speak first. Needless to say, The Yak sang quite well even though his falsetto cracked, right? But his overall performance was very good."

The Yak nodded. "Thank you, Teacher."

Zhang Xia said, "Onto The Clown next. I don't really know what to say about him. I'm sure that he has a very high artistic level, and he's definitely a big shot judging from the way he moves, as well as his posture and onstage presence—"

"That might not be the case. I feel that he could be a newcomer," interrupted Wang Zhuishu.

Zhang Xia asked, "Can a newcomer sing that well?"

Wang Zhuishu replied, "The newcomers these days are all really amazing."

Chen Guang added, "I think that he might not be a part of the music scene and could be a movie star instead? Because the other contestants have clues that we can make our guesses from, and there are still some possible candidates that come to mind. But as for this guy here, I simply have no memory of anyone like him!"

Famous variety show host Chen Yidong spoke up, "If I voted, I would vote for The Yak."

The Yak bowed ever so slightly to express his gratitude.

The Clown just stood there calmly.

Chen Guang stayed silent for a second. "From an artistic point of view, The Clown's performance was absolutely wonderful and I would evaluate his rendition of the song to be perfect. On a personal level, I'm also fully in support of The Clown. But from a professional point of view, my vote must still go to The Yak even though there were some minor mistakes in his performance too."

The Yak bowed to show his thanks.

Wang Zhuishu gave it some thought. "I'd vote for The Yak."

The Yak bowed again. "Thank you, Teacher."

Yao Jiancai declared, "I don't understand what being professional or unprofessional is. All I know is that The Clown's song touched me, so I'd certainly give him my vote!"

Zhang Xia hesitated for a bit and sighed. "I guess I'd vote for The Yak."

Han Qi was getting anxious in the wings. "Have the judges gone

blind?"

One of her colleagues said, "Yeah, I also think that The Clown sang very well!"

A different colleague said, "They're analyzing it from their professional point of view. The Clown sang well and the song is good too, but there were too many mistakes in every line that he sang."

Han Qi said angrily, "But Teacher Clown has a cold!"

The colleague sighed, "Hai, but this is a competition."

Han Qi could not accept this, she really could not accept it!

Meanwhile, Zhang Ye, onstage, did not say anything.

Dong Shanshan said, "Well then! Audience members, please pick up your voting devices and vote for the singer you like."

The critical voting round began!

But what made Han Qi's blood run even colder was that The Clown's vote count immediately fell behind the moment the voting started!

The Yak: 20 votes!

The Clown: 11 votes!

Their vote count kept rising!

The audience members were exchanging words among themselves.

"Who should I vote for?"

"The Clown for sure!"

"The Clown's song was so touching!"

"But he made singing mistakes—the judges said so."

"Yeah, the judges are still the professionals at the end of the day."

"I should just vote for The Yak then."

"Although The Yak's singing did not move me as much, his singing was still very good. At least there weren't as many issues with his singing."

"I don't think that The Clown made any mistakes. I believe he used what's called 'artistic license'!"

The Yak: 70 votes!

The Clown: 61 votes!

The Yak was leading all the way!

Han Qi urged, "Go up! Go up!"

Perhaps someone heard her pleas. The Clown's tally actually started catching up bit by bit.

The difference was only eight votes.

Then it became five.

Then one.

At the final moment, the voting ended.

The Yak: 217 votes!

The Clown: 219 votes!

The remaining voters abstained from voting; several dozen votes had not been cast. That made it the biggest group of audience

members to abstain from voting today.

The Clown won!

A narrow victory of two votes!

Han Qi was thrilled and heaved a sigh of relief!

He won!

He really won!

At least there wouldn't be any more worry that he would get eliminated today, but as for becoming the Masked King of this first episode? Judging from the audience's enthusiasm and the judges' emphasis on the professionalism of one's singing, Han Qi and the program team staff knew that The Clown would definitely not be able to compete for the position of the Masked King in the first episode. Since the judges valued voice quality greatly and the audience also placed a great deal of importance on having a flawless voice, even if The Clown still had stamina left to take the stage for his next song, it was impossible that he would clinch the round with his already badly strained voice!

Chapter 996: A last-minute song change by The Clown!

In the waiting room.

Han Qi said, "We're already through to the next round."

Zhang Ye nodded.

"No matter how you perform the next song, we can still proceed to the second episode. Teacher, why not consider not performing the second song tonight since your health is..."

Zhang Ye smiled at her.

Han Qi said, "The second round battle for the crown of the Masked King will be taking place immediately. According to the broadcast order, the elimination round for the three singers who were defeated will take place first. However, today's recording order was changed, so we'll record the battle of the Masked King round first. You're slated as the last of the three to appear onstage, but if you really can't bear it anymore, let's just give this round up. I'll communicate this to the production team since we won't get eliminated even if we withdraw now."

Zhang Ye did not say anything.

Han Qi's earpiece crackled. "Ah, it has already started!"

Petal Shower's figure appeared on the TV as Dong Shanshan handed her the stage. The moment Petal Shower appeared, the audience suddenly rippled with excitement. This was because her previous performance left a deep impression on them and they liked her very much. Hence, the atmosphere exploded right as she took the stage!

Han Qi sighed and said, "It definitely wouldn't be a problem with your skill. We'll battle them after you've recovered from your cold." She took a pause. "S-So rest a little longer. I'm gonna head out."

Zhang Ye gave a noise of acknowledgment.

The doors closed.

No one else was left in the room.

Zhang Ye weakly propped himself up and watched the TV.

"When did we start putting on a façade?

"When did we start forgetting to tell the truth?

"When did we start forgetting how to love someone.

"When did we start forgetting how to admit we were wrong."

Petal Shower was performing a rock song that required her to sustain her falsetto. The range on her falsetto was simply extraordinary, and her technique was well-honed too. Her voice was completely different from Zhang Ye's voice that scattered through the registers. It was a very clear tone, and she could hit her falsetto range as and when she wanted to!

The audience had truly never heard someone sing in such a way. It was quite refreshing!

Waving hands!

Screaming!

The atmosphere in the studio was heating up!

Next, it was Sunflower in the Starlight's turn to take the stage.

"Bom!

"Bom!

"Bom!"

It was a fast-paced English song!

The high notes were very strong! It was highly lethal!

The moment he opened his mouth, he sang in a high pitch and with great explosiveness throughout his performance!

Watching the TV, Zhang Ye could see that a lot of the audience members were so pumped that they stood from their seats. From inside the waiting room he even seemed to hear the faint sound of screaming coming from the studio!

Then Zhang Ye looked away and turned off the TV.

The room suddenly became quiet, similar to what Zhang Ye was feeling at the moment.

When Zhang Ye stood onstage after his performance and faced the judges' comments about the weaknesses in his singing, he did not say anything. Right now, he did not want to say anything either.

After he drank another Stamina Potion, he finally mustered up enough strength to open the game ring interface.

He activated the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) with much difficulty.

His Reputation Points were starting to decrease rapidly.

-100,000!

-100,000!

He tapped on the Lottery Draw (One).

He straight away added 500 additional stakes to the 100,000 Reputation Points per spin of the lottery draw.

The wheel began to move.

The needle started spinning.

One revolution.

Three revolutions.

Five revolutions.

Zhang Ye looked calmly at the wheel as the needle came to a rest in the Skills Category region. When he opened the golden treasure chest, the item majestically appeared from within.

[Piano Skill Experience Book] × 501: Increases player's piano skill experience.

It turned out otherwise indeed.

Zhang Ye laughed at himself, a self-deprecating chuckle.

The lottery was not omnipotent and the Lucky Halo did not necessarily help him achieve whatever results he wanted as it did not have sapience. It was only a tool that could help increase his luck stat. Zhang Ye was thinking of getting some sort of medicine to treat his cold or an item to treat his injuries from the lucky draw. However, Zhang Ye was not even sure if the lottery draw system had anything similar to the items he wanted, so he did not hold out hope that he would really win them so coincidentally. He had only intended to give it a try so that he could stop wondering if it would happen at all.

This wasn't too bad.

This was a rather good outcome, actually

Zhang Ye consumed all the experience books.

The door opened.

Han Qi and a program team producer walked in. "Teacher Clown, it's almost your turn to go onstage. Can you hold together? If not, then this round..."

Zhang Ye stood up. "I'm fine, let's go."

Han Qi quickly said, "Let me help you."

"There's no need." Zhang Ye shook his head.

On the way to the studio, he reached into the game ring's inventory once again. This time, he took out five Stamina Potions and gulped them all down!

Very good!

He could still hang in there!

Zhang Ye smiled. He was suddenly full of fighting spirit!

Along the way, he saw a lot of the program team staff.

Hu Fei was being astonished by Petal Shower's and Sunflower's passionate singing. When he saw The Clown, he immediately turned around and asked with concern, "Are you going to be alright?"

Han Qi answered for him, "The teacher will be fine."

Hu Fei nodded. "Just try your best."

Hou Ge said, "You already performed amazingly."

Dafei added, "Don't force yourself. The outcome isn't that

important anymore."

In reality, it was not that the outcome was unimportant, but that there was no suspense.

Han Qi had listened to the two contestants' performances, as had Hu Fei, Hou Ge, and the others. Judging from the audience's expressions and outpouring, it was quite clear that today's Masked King would definitely be either one of them. As for whether Petal Shower or Sunflower was better, that was still hard to say. Anyway, it definitely wouldn't be The Clown. Be it his health, voice, or the audience and judges' judgment, it was unlikely that they would let him, a singer whose voice was not in a good state, take the throne of the Masked King in this first episode. It was already made clear in the previous round between The Yak and him. Although The Clown's performance had moved many of the audience members and judges, he still just barely won and nearly got eliminated.

Hu Fei reported the time, "Get ready. There's only a minute left."

Music Director Bai Yuanfei also came over, wishing to have a last-minute discussion with Zhang Ye, "Since your body can't handle it, lower the song by an octave and don't sing the high notes. Just finish singing the song. That'll be enough."

Zhang Ye smiled.

Try my best?

Don't force myself?

Just finish singing the song?

Zhang Ye suddenly said something in his hoarse voice that shocked the program team staff. "I'm terribly sorry, but I'd like to switch songs."

Everyone was stunned!

Bai Yuanfei exclaimed, "What?"

Hou Ge nearly toppled over. "Switch songs?"

Hu Fei was also panicking. "Why would you switch songs at a time like this? You're about to go onstage!"

"Teacher!" Han Qi was also stunned!

No one knew what The Clown was thinking!

Bai Yuanfei said, "It's too late for that! There isn't an arrangement; the band isn't prepared either. Who'll play your accompaniment if you take the stage like this? You didn't even rehearse it! Y-You're taking a huge risk!"

At this moment, the Miracle Wheels band members came over.

The guitarist said, "Switch songs?"

The drummer said, "That's not actually necessary, right?"

You stand no chance of becoming the Masked King now, so why would you do that?

Your health and voice are in this state. Why are you still trying so hard?

Zhang Ye bluntly asked, "Do you have a piano?"

Bai Yuanfei was taken aback. "We do."

Zhang Ye nodded. "That's enough."

What's the meaning of this?

You even know how to play the piano?

Chapter 997: I am a beautiful, beautiful wild rose!

In the studio.

Host Dong Shanshan announced, "Let's welcome our next singer—The Clown!"

Applause sounded.

The Clown came out onstage looking very lonely.

Chen Guang sighed. "This is the worse time to come onstage."

Wang Zhuishu nodded. "The two contestants before him should've squeezed the atmosphere dry!"

Amy asked, "Who do you guys think will be the Masked King?"

Zhang Xia pondered and said, "Petal Shower's chances of winning are the greatest."

Chen Yidong disagreed, "Just based on the first round of songs alone, Sunflower is definitely going to be the Masked King!"

Zhang Xia said, "Petal Shower handled some parts of her singing really well."

"Who can compare with Sunflower's tenor?" Chen Yidong said.

The judges all had differing opinions and started disagreeing with each other, yet no one mentioned The Clown.

The audience did not keep him in mind either.

The two contestants before him had both performed passionate, fast songs with high notes. They were songs that fired up the atmosphere, which was why many in the audience were still clinging to the earlier performances.

"Aiya, Sunflower's singing was so intense!"

"I still like my Petal Shower!"

"Haha, when did she become yours?"

"Anyway, I'm already a diehard fan of Petal Shower!"

"Do you know who she is?"

"I don't know. That's why I'm curious!"

"Eh, The Clown has already taken the stage?"

"He won't be able to sustain his voice anymore, so he's more like a supporting act in the first battle to be Masked King."

"He only advanced because he got a lucky win."

"Yeah, the Masked King will definitely be either Petal Shower or Sunflower."

"Obviously. Must we spell it out?"

"Hur hur, seems like these two people have stage names related to flowers?"

"All that's left to see now is which 'flower' has the greater skill!"

The lights suddenly dimmed!

When the audience and judges finally realized that the next performance was about to begin, they were surprised to discover that the house band had already left the stage!

Where had the band gone?

Where was everyone?

All of a sudden, they realized The Clown was sitting in front of a piano.

Ah?

Playing the piano and singing at the same time?

Everyone froze!

Chen Guang, Zhang Xia, and the others were also surprised!

They had all seen The Clown's state and knew that it couldn't have been faked. He was indeed quite sick and had to force himself to stay standing, but what was this? In that state of his, why would he still want to play the piano himself? Playing the piano was unlike playing a keyboard. It was [pressure sensitive](#) and required strength to play it properly! You already have no hopes of fighting for the throne of Masked King, so what are you trying to do? What are you thinking?

No one in the crew or judging panel could understand!

The audience was also unable to understand!

You pushed so hard to finish your previous song! Why are you trying so hard for the second song as well?

The judges and audience, and even the program team's staff, knew one thing though. If you could get on this stage, you must at least have some level of fame. At the minimum, you had to be

someone that a lot of people knew. To be able to get to that level, you couldn't possibly lack a stage to perform on. Even if you gave up today, there would still be other platforms and stages welcoming you with open arms, so why are you risking your life like this! Just why?!

However, no one knew this one thing.

There were no other stages for the man under The Clown's mask to perform on!

Banned!

Frozen!

Suppressed in the news!

Ostracized by industry peers!

Jobless!

Old injuries acting up!

A serious cold!

It was the worst period that he was going through, as well as the time he felt the most vulnerable!

No one appreciated him!

He had sunk to a supporting act!

The piano sounded.

A flowing, watery melody reverberated throughout the studio.

The judges were stunned!

The audience was stunned!

The piano's melody carried sadness, a sorrow that silenced the entire studio!

The spotlights shone down on him.

Everyone's gaze fell to where he sat.

Zhang Ye played the piano oblivious to all around him. The melody flowed from his fingertips ceaselessly with every note representing a part of his sadness. He should have been the most beautiful thing in this world, he should have been the most beautiful [wild rose](#) in this world. But right now, he could only wear a mask and hide all of himself beneath it. In this place where no one appreciated him, he would sing a song that perhaps only he knew, with that hoarse voice of his!

"These days, seasons fly by, flowers bloom aplenty.

"Winds wander, clouds float by, nature shut behind the door.

"To be plucked uneasily, I slowly realize.

"Bloomed already, but no one coming is completely expected."

Han Qi was stunned in the wings. "Teacher..."

Music Director Bai Yuanfei was watching slack-jawed.

Zhang Xia was stunned!

Amy could feel herself getting the goosebumps all over her body!

This...

Zhang Ye closed his eyes and sang softly.

"In the night, I'll sway with the wind and rain.

"When I see the break of dawn, I'll shed some tears.

"I'm a beautiful, beautiful wild rose.

"Not letting spring arrive in vain.

"Blossoming til it's dark, infatuating passersby.

"As I calmly watch myself wither away."

Wild rose?

A withering but beautiful wild rose?

Chen Guang stood up impassioned!

Zhang Xia stood up!

Amy and the other judges all stood up in a frisson of excitement!

This...

This song...

Zhang Ye continued playing and singing with his eyes still closed.

"I'm a beautiful, beautiful wild rose.

"Hating the Heavens for being unfair.

"Plucked of my buds.

"Stripped of my heart.

"Sadly given away as just a rose."

Plucked of his buds?

Stripped of his heart?

Sadly given away as just a rose?

Han Qi stared blankly at the stage, not knowing when her tears had started falling. She tried to wipe them away but found that she couldn't stop them from flowing!

Many of the audience members watched the stage, hypnotized, feeling felt like someone had pierced through their hearts!

The figure sitting at the piano looked very sad and lonely.

However, there was a hint of a smile on his face when he finally opened his eyes. His singing was still as rough and hoarse as before. But this time, he didn't even have the strength and voice to

hit the high notes anymore, yet this represented the current Zhang Ye. Having had his hands and feet bound, getting his mouth muzzled, this was the current him!

"Ground's my bed, sky's my blanket, meteors are my tears.

"At times awake, at times drunk, the geese have made their return.

"In turn happy, in turn sad, the spring's light isn't bright.

"No regrets, no burdens, sweet dreams drift away like the stream.

"Willingness is a patch of color adorning the world.

"But unwilling to touch on what is right and wrong.

"I'm a beautiful, beautiful wild rose.

"Not letting spring arrive in vain.

"Blossoming til it's dark, infatuating passersby.

"As I calmly watch myself wither away."

Blossoming til it's dark?

Even if no one were to appreciate him?

Even if no one found him?

Even if he was withering away?

Listening to this, Zhang Xia's eyes reddened.

Why are you still smiling?

Why are you still smiling at this time?

Suddenly, the piano music stopped!

The man sitting at the piano was out of strength. The hand he was using to play the piano was no longer able to play the complex melody as it became more and more sluggish. He was forced to simplify the melody and use the simplest combination of notes to accompany his singing!

"I am a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful wild rose!

"Hating the Heavens for being unfair.

"Plucked of my buds.

"Stripped of my heart.

"Sadly given away as just a rose."

There were no high notes, but those hoarse and sad vocals cut deep into everyone's hearts!

Han Qi was crying!

Xiao Lu was crying!

A lot people were crying!

The emotions of many of the audience members exploded at this moment!

The entire audience stood up!

The atmosphere had hit a fever pitch!

Supporting act?

No!

No!

You're the true lead!

You're the most beautiful "flower" of all today!

Chapter 998: Birth of the first Masked King!

The music stopped.

The performance ended.

Suddenly, someone in the audience shouted, "The Clown! The Clown!"

Another person shouted along, "The Clown!"

Han Qi was wiping her tears away while shouting, "Teacher Clown!"

Amy raised her arms over her head and shouted, "The Clown!"

Xiao Lu screamed, "The Clown!"

Executive Director Hu Fei clenched his fists tightly in the wings!

It was fantastic!

This song was fantastic!

This guy was...fantastic!

"The Clown!"

"The Clown!"

"The Clown!"

"The Clown!"

The shouting increased and slowly became more similar!

Such a scene was nearly impossible to describe in words!

Eyes now open, Zhang Ye was stunned for a bit. He stood up from the piano and struggled a little to bend forward slightly in the direction of the judges and audience. It was supposed to be a bow. Zhang Ye did not expect that his song would stir up such a huge clamor in the studio as all he wanted was to express his inner feelings. He did not even expect that anyone would understand the things in the song because it was not a popular song with the masses in his previous world. Not everyone knew this song, and there were also some people who disliked it. The Midday Sun performed the original version; Wang Bao was the songwriter and wrote the piece with a piano accompaniment. The version that Zhang Ye sang was an adaptation from the original version with some modifications of his own. For example, the last verse with the "beautiful, beautiful, beautiful" repetition was implemented by Zhang Ye based on his understanding of the song. It was subsequently covered by Han Hong, and her version was the one that most people had probably heard.

Zhang Ye liked this song greatly when he was still in his previous world. As he was neither handsome nor had great qualifications, those who knew that he wanted to join the entertainment industry were always persuading him to give up the thought. It was only when he had joined the entertainment industry that he had a much deeper sentiment for this song. Everyone liked garden roses and thought that they were the most beautiful flowers of all. However, he knew that he was not a garden rose. He was just a wild rose shrub that thought of itself as very beautiful, yet went unnoticed by all around him.

So he wanted to switch songs for this performance. Even if he sang badly, he still wanted to change songs at the last minute.

The crowd was very excited.

They were shouting.

They were screaming.

Some of them were even crying.

Applause thundered as everyone stood up!

Are they...applauding me?

Are they...crying for me?

When Zhang Ye saw this, he suddenly felt quite touched. He wanted to use a poem to express himself like he used to but knew that he couldn't do so.

Dong Shanshan returned to the stage. "Let's thank The Clown for his performance."

Zhang Ye glanced at her.

Dong Shanshan's smile seemed a bit unnatural. "Please welcome Sunflower in the Starlight and Petal Shower back to the stage...." She then stopped.

A lot of the audience members were momentarily stunned when they realized that the host was crying.

Petal Shower was the first to get back on the stage. When she saw Dong Shanshan crying, she immediately went to pat her on the shoulder and gave her a quick hug.

Dong Shanshan smiled while wiping away her tears as she said into the microphone, "I'm sorry that I got a little emotional." She turned to look at Hu Fei, off in the wings, and said, "Director, please edit this part out."

Hu Fei raised his hand and gave her a thumbs up. He didn't blame her at all, instead comforting her.

Dong Shanshan apologized, "Please pardon me for being

unprofessional."

By now, Sunflower in the Starlight had also come back onto the stage. He patted Dong Shanshan on the shoulder in encouragement like a senior would.

Zhang Xia spoke, "It's alright, Shanshan, I cried too. There's only one thing that I want to know right now." She stared straight at that man in the clown mask and asked, "Who are you?"

The Clown did not say a word.

Zhang Xia fired off, "For someone who's in such bad shape, with a fever and cold, you can still sing like that and put in so much feeling into it. If you told me that you weren't a professional singer, I certainly wouldn't believe it. But I really can't think of anyone who matches you in the entire music industry!"

Wang Zhuishu said, "Maybe it's because of his cold that his voice changed. That's why we can't tell who it is! Or could he be a newcomer? But how can there be a newcomer who's like him!"

The judges' thoughts were scattered!

Someone had previously thought that he was from the acting industry, but that thought wavered now!

Another felt that he could be a big shot from the music industry, but they soon hesitated about that thought too!

Who was it!

Who the fuck was this guy!

The audience also had an important question right now. They really wanted to find out the identity of the man underneath the mask!

By this point, Dong Shanshan had recomposed herself. "Before the final voting starts, would our panel of guest judges please cast their votes first. Who do you think should be crowned as the Masked King tonight?"

Wang Zhuishu gave it some thought and answered, "I think I'll probably still vote for Petal Shower! Her singing was very good and her technique was wonderful. It's practically without any faults!"

Petal Shower bowed.

Chen Yidong said, "I'll vote for Sunflower in the Starlight. Combining the two rounds of singing, I feel that he truly deserves to be the first Masked King."

Sunflower nodded and said into the voice-transforming microphone, "Thank you, Teacher Chen."

Han Qi clenched her fists tightly in the wings.

Why?

Why is it not The Clown?

What the hell are you guys thinking!

Before, Han Qi did not really like this clown person. Since their first interaction, The Clown been constantly teasing her. Everyone thought that he was some experienced but very mischievous veteran of the music industry. But as she came to know more about The Clown, she became completely moved by him. She felt that it was very fortunate for her to be the only liaison in the program team for The Clown and was very honored by this as well!

He was a wild rose!

A flower that was different from everyone else!

The audience also made some subtle criticism.

"What the heck!"

"Are those two deaf?"

"They should totally have voted for The Clown!"

"The Clown's song was amazing!"

"I think the same. It's so good that it's beyond description!"

"You can't say that! Sunflower sang better!"

"I still prefer to support Petal Shower."

It was only normal to have differences in opinions. It was impossible for everyone to think the same. Music itself was perceived based on each individual's opinion and life experience. People who listened to the same song could not possibly have the same emotions about it at the end. Perhaps only those who have had similar experiences could understand Zhang Ye's "Wild Rose."

Then, Chen Guang spoke.

Chen Guang looked at the three masked singers. "On a professional basis, I would definitely choose between Sunflower and Petal Shower. Their voices, singing techniques, and appeal cannot be faulted; they're impeccable. In the first round, I made my decision following this set of standards even though I really liked The Clown's first song, 'Wolf.' But right now, I would like to apologize."

Apologize?

What are you apologizing for?

The judges were taken aback.

The audience were also startled.

Chen Guang said loudly, "To claim that I was judging on a professional basis was totally unprofessional of me! My decision might be a little willful and rash of me, but I can't not be rash. If I were to vote, I would definitely, definitely, definitely...cast this vote for The Clown and only The Clown! There's no why! There isn't a need for a why either!"

Han Qi was pleasantly surprised!

Someone was supporting him!

Someone was finally supporting Teacher Clown!

Yao Jiancai also spoke up, "Let me say this first: I do not fully know what being professional or unprofessional is, nor am I a person from the music industry, nor have I dabbled in music before." He smiled and said, "If my long-time crosstalk partner were here, his evaluation would probably be more professional than mine. But I can only follow my heart, so if I chose, my choice would be the same as Old Chen's. I would 100% cast my vote for The Clown without any hesitation! I don't know how good his voice is, and I also don't know how well it was sung. All I know is that this song, 'Wild Rose,' has moved me! This song has totally said what I wanted to say."

Amy stood from her seat and cleared her throat. "I hereby announce that from today onwards, I have become a fan of The Clown!" She looked at The Clown and said anxiously, "Who are you? I really, really like you a lot!"

The Clown gave her a slight bow.

Zhang Xia said, "I will also cast my vote for The Clown this time. Singing well requires a good voice, good technique, and all kinds of other factors. But ultimately, music has to be able to move people, and feelings are above all that. Petal Shower and Sunflower have both achieved that, but The Clown has undoubtedly done it best today with his song. His second performance essentially disregarded all the so-called technicalities and techniques of singing and was of such a high level as well. This sort of infusion and projection of emotions, this turning of the disadvantage of a bad vocal condition into something that helped make the song even better, it's absolutely not something that can be learned. This has surpassed any techniques around!"

The judges finished with their evaluations.

Dong Shanshan said, "Well then, let the voting begin. Will the 500 audience members please consider who you think is best and cast your votes so that we may witness the crowning of our first Masked King."

Han Qi felt extremely nervous.

Many of the program team staff were debating.

"I like The Clown!"

"Me too!"

"He tried so hard!"

"I just wish that the voting would end quickly so that The Clown can get off the stage and rest."

The audience had already picked up their voting devices and started to cast their votes!

On the big screen, the tallies were being compiled in real-time!

Petal Shower was at 10 votes...20 votes...30 votes!

Sunflower's votes were also increasing very quickly. 20 votes...30 votes!

"Rise higher!"

"Ah, Sunflower's votes went up!"

"Oh, Petal Shower's in first place!"

"The Clown! The Clown!"

"The Clown has taken the lead! He's in the lead!"

"He got overtaken!"

The competition was very intense!

The judges looked at the screen in astonishment!

The audience was staring at the same thing, not blinking. A lot of them were chanting for their favorite singer's stage name!

The three contestants' stage names in the standings kept switching positions, each replacing the other's at the top. A lot of people expected this, but could not predict who would end up as the final winner of this round. The suspense was too great to bear!

Finally, the voting phase ended!

Dong Shanshan immediately said, "The voting stops now!"

On the big screen, the tallies suddenly stopped. Those who did not vote within the time limit were considered to have abstained!

Everyone looked at the big screen!

Sunflower turned around!

Petal Shower leaned sideways and looked!

Han Qi glanced at the big screen nervously!

Only Zhang Ye did not turn around. He stood there very composed, or maybe he only had enough strength to remain standing.

The results were out!

The Masked King was crowned!

The crowd was instantly stoked!

"The Clown!"

"The Clown!"

"The Clown!"

"The Clown!"

Han Qi was so emotional that she started crying again. She

screamed and hugged a male colleague next to her. "He won! Teacher has won! " Sobbing, she smiled through her tears.

That male colleague on the program team coughed in embarrassment. "Congratulations."

Chapter 999: A few words from The Clown!

The Clown won!

Applause rang out in the studio!

The judges were also cheering for him!

The Clown raised his voice-transforming microphone to say a few words.

His first words were: "Thank you."

His next words came after some thought: "Thank you."

Zhang Ye had braced himself and taken the stage to perform. He never considered singing just well enough, no, he wanted to do his best on every song he sang, to relate all that he wanted to say, and to finish doing the things that he wanted done. Just like the time he released the documentary live at the Central TV press conference by himself, he did it to the best of his ability. Even if he landed himself in a tight spot because of his actions, he did not care as the consequences were unimportant to him. He was the same today, not thinking about winning some spot as the first Masked King. He personally knew that he was in very bad shape too and that he was very lucky not to have been eliminated in the previous round. So when he saw some of the audience members crying, when he saw that many of them were moved by his song, and when he realized that he had actually been voted as the first Masked King of the show, Zhang Ye honestly felt...very good.

His face was covered!

His voice caught!

But there were still people who understood him!

His voice could still be heard by others!

This was good.

This was really very good.

And so he wanted to thank them.

As such, he said thank you twice.

Applause thundered!

"Great!"

"You're the best!"

"The Clown!"

"The Clown!"

"You sang so well!"

With that, Zhang Ye exited the stage.

There was still another segment to be recorded, the elimination round to send away two contestants before the first episode's recording of King of Masked Singers could be concluded. In the next episode, the rules of the competition were different from the Chinese version of King of Masked Singers. The Masked King would not have to reveal their identity, but that position was also not going to be theirs forever. The Masked King from the previous episode would still have to participate in the next episode's competition and could even get eliminated from it. Meanwhile, the two contestants who were eliminated from the first episode would be replaced by new masked singers to compete in the show's new episode! However, Zhang Ye no longer had any strength to watch the rest of the recording. He was utterly exhausted after having spent all his energy onstage!

Han Qi and many of the program team staff surrounded Zhang Ye to help him off the stage.

"Teacher Clown."

"How are you doing?"

"You sang so wonderfully today!"

"Will there be a vehicle coming to pick you up? Why don't you let Little Han send you back instead?"

Zhang Ye thanked them for their kindness but did not let anyone see him off. After everyone left, he found a place to change out of his costume and even took off his socks. Then he took his bag with him before activating Invisibility (Upgraded) and departed from Beijing Television.

In the vicinity of the parking lot.

"Eh, Teacher Zhang Ye?"

"Teacher Zhang, you're here?"

"Brother Hu and Teacher Shanshan were looking for you earlier."

"Yeah, when they saw your car parked here they looked for you for a while, since you didn't answer your phone when they called. So you were here watching the recording all this time? Are you leaving now?"

A few of his former colleagues spotted him out here.

Zhang Ye smiled and nodded at them but did not open his mouth and speak. He was afraid that he would give himself away.

Those coworkers of his did not notice anything unusual about it. Back when they were working in the same office, Zhang Ye was not someone who really liked to talk much. It was only when the topic of work came up, or if there was a quarrel or fight with other people that he had no lack of words to say. So no one thought much of it nor was there anything for them to contemplate.

"Take care then."

"Goodbye, Teacher Zhang."

Zhang Ye waved goodbye to them and caught his breath before struggling into his car. After fastening his seat belt, he took out another Stamina Potion from the game ring's inventory and drank it. He managed to perk himself up and drove back home in a hurry.

...

Back at home.

Zhang Ye collapsed into his bed and coughed a couple times. He could feel his cold becoming less severe. It might have been due to the cortisone shots that he had received at the Beijing Television infirmary taking effect, although his chest throbbed and he could feel slight shoulder and middle back pain in the places he had been injured!

But Zhang Ye was smiling.

He had been crowned Masked King!

That was enough for him! It was worth all the pain and injuries he endured!

Perhaps because Beijing Television had finished recording the show, Zhang Ye's cell phone suddenly started ringing. His cell phone was still in his pants' pocket as he hadn't taken it out since he'd gotten back home. He had to prop himself up while he looked for his pants that he had changed out of. He retrieved the cell phone from them. He took a look at the caller ID and saw that it was Yao Jiancai calling.

Zhang Ye cleared his throat to try to make himself sound as normal as possible.

He answered the call.

Yao Jiancai greeted: "Zhang'er, what's up?"

Zhang Ye replied: "I'm lazin' about."

"What's with your voice? Why do you sound so sleepy? Are you in bed?"

"Yeah, I just got back and hit the sack."

"I didn't see you at the recording studio today. Why didn't you

come? Haha, I saw a really amazing singer today. He sang so wonderfully!"

Zhang Ye laughed. "Really?"

"You're the executive producer right? C'mon, share with me, who's that guy? You must definitely know something. Don't try to fool me."

Zhang Ye blinked. "I honestly don't know. I didn't follow up with or participate in the production work at all."

"Heh, I thought that you'd know for sure. You didn't hear that guy's song, but it was so good that I can't describe it in words. Also, nobody had ever heard the songs he performed before. Perhaps his talent agency had them written specifically for him before the competition, so going along that line, a newcomer would definitely not enjoy such privileges. He must be a big name, and it's definitely a big name who's a supporting pillar of their agency. That's why he could enjoy such treatment from them! They're all good songs and I believe it would cost quite a bit to even buy the copyrights to them."

Zhang Ye smiled and said: "I guess so."

Yao Jiancai said: "Oh well, I'll let you get back to sleep. I'll ask around some."

He hung up.

Soon after, Zhang Xia also called.

The moment the call connected, Grandma Zhang said: "Little Zhang, I have just two questions for you. Who is Petal Shower? Who is The Clown?"

Zhang Ye chuckled and said: "Old Yao just called me as well to ask about this. I really don't know as I'm only in charge of the overall production. I did not oversee any other parts of the show and did not participate in those roles either."

Zhang Xia did not believe him. "That's impossible. Even you do not know?"

"I really do not know." Zhang Ye lied without blinking.

"Alright."

Zhang Ye suddenly remembered something. "Oh right, Grandma Zhang. Did Sunset Glow get eliminated?"

Zhang Ye felt that Sunset Glow was someone that he knew personally, and Petal Shower also felt somewhat familiar to him, although he couldn't be sure. As for Sunflower in the Starlight and the other contestants, Zhang Ye did not have any idea about them because he probably did not know them, but it could also turn out that he was familiar with them. Nothing was certain here.

Zhang Xia replied: "Sunset Glow did not get eliminated."

"Thanks."

Old Yao.

Grandma Zhang.

I'm sorry about this, but I really have to keep it from you two for now. I will apologize to you two at a later time.

No one knew that Zhang Ye had anonymously joined the King of Masked Singers competition, not even his parents and Old Wu were informed about it, so he wasn't planning on telling anyone else!

The main issue here was that he was afraid that if he lost, it would be too embarrassing for him!

He had thought about it before, that if he were to lose, he wouldn't reveal himself and would just exit the stage!

Chapter 1000: Hero and Zero!

The next day.

It was a Saturday.

Early in the morning, the Internet stirred with activity!

"It's going to be broadcast soon!"

"My King of Masked Singers is coming!"

"I wonder if Zhang Ye's new work will create yet another miracle in the viewership ratings. After all, the show isn't directed by Zhang Ye this time, so everything is still a big unknown!"

"I'm just waiting for tonight. I'm so looking forward to it!"

"Who are the first episode's contestants? Did anyone attend yesterday's live recording?"

"I heard that the first episode's Masked King is someone called Petal Shower!"

"Ah? Why did I hear that it was someone called Water Buffalo who became the first episode's Masked King instead?"

"Is there even a contestant called Water Buffalo?"

"Damn, are you people for real? Who's telling the truth and who's lying? Can someone please give it to me straight!"

"In any case, those who went to the live recording said that the show is very, very good!"

"Really?"

"It shouldn't be too bad. It's Zhang Ye's creation after all."

"Will there really be big shots joining the show to sing?"

"I don't know!"

Online news was always a mixture of truth and lie. Some people who had not even gone to the live recording would confidently tell others just who the Masked King was and who had been eliminated in this episode's recording. In the confusion, the netizens could not tell truth from fiction, so they had no choice but to wait until the night to find out during the premiere episode!

...

Later that morning.

Jiaomen.

Rao Aimin's house.

Chenchen was doing her homework. "Old Yang, how do you do this question?"

Yang Shu looked at her. "Solve it yourself."

Chenchen said unhappily, "Tell me how to do it."

Yang Shu shook her head. "Your aunt won't allow that."

Chenchen said in annoyance, "Zhang Ye always helps me do my homework."

"I can't control what Senior Bro does," Yang Shu said, "but I can't help you do your homework because that's only going to do you harm."

Chenchen: "..."

These days, all of Yang Shu's meals were taken care of by Rao Aimin. The only condition for this arrangement was that Yang Shu had to tutor Chenchen every day. Yang Shu was a very dedicated and serious person, and would carry out what she promised. She really was keeping her eyes on Chenchen to supervise her and tutor her, although she definitely would not help her do her

homework.

Bang bang bang.

Suddenly, someone knocked on the door!

Chenchen looked to the door and asked, "Who is it?"

Zhang Ye's weak voice came from outside. "Open up!"

Yang Shu instantly became spirited and ran over. She opened the door and greeted him joyfully, "Senior Bro!" However, she was startled at the sight of her senior martial brother.

Zhang Ye looked very pale and seemed like he was on the verge of collapsing. It was as though he would die the very next second. When Zhang Ye saw his junior martial sister, his legs turned even weaker as he wailed, "Help me stand! I can't stay upright anymore!"

Yang Shu was horrified. "Senior Bro, what happened to you?"

Zhang Ye cried, "I can't take it anymore. Quickly let me lie down!"

Yang Shu was extremely anxious. She quickly propped Zhang Ye up and led him carefully into the house. She hurriedly helped him to the sofa in front of them to lay him down. "Stay strong! You

must stay strong!" Yang Shu was getting really anxious as she knelt down to remove Zhang Ye's shoes and quickly covered him with a blanket.

Chenchen blinked several times as she looked over. "Zhang Ye, what's with you?"

Lying on the sofa, Zhang Ye whined, "I'm gonna die. I can't make it. Where's Old Rao? Call Old Rao out now." His breathing was very shallow and he seemed about to die.

Chenchen: "..."

Yang Shu's eyes reddened, "Senior Bro! Senior Bro, you must hold on! I-I'll go and get Master Rao immediately!" Then she shouted upstairs in panic, "Master Rao! Master Rao, come down quick! My senior bro isn't gonna make it! Quickly save my senior bro!" She looked at Zhang Ye again and asked, "Who injured you? I-I will get revenge for you!"

Revenge?

Avenge your sister!

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes and said, "This bro isn't dead yet!"

Footfalls thudded from upstairs. Rao Aimin came trotting down the stairs. "Why the shouting?"

Yang Shu cried, "Master Rao, please come quick! M-M-My senior bro isn't gonna make it!"

When Rao Aimin saw Zhang Ye lying on the sofa wailing, she was amused. "What is going on here? Who crushed you?" Yang Shu did not know Zhang Ye that well, but how could Rao Aimin not know him? She and Zhang Ye had known each other for a very long time and she knew exactly what this fellow's style was. When she saw him behaving in that manner, she knew that he was definitely not in any serious trouble. She made her way over to him and nudged him with a foot. "Stop playing dead. You a piece of broken porcelain?"

Zhang Ye groaned but did not move.

Yang Shu said anxiously, "Please take a look at my senior bro!"

Rao Aimin shook her head as she sat down on the sofa and prodded him. "Go on, scooch in."

Zhang Ye obediently shifted closer to the backrest of the sofa.

Rao Aimin reached out and took his pulse. Eight or so seconds later, she scanned Zhang Ye. "Your old injuries, eh?"

"I'm not going to make it." Zhang Ye groaned and whined still.

Rao Aimin asked, "Didn't your injuries get better, kid? Who did you fight recently?"

Zhang Ye insisted, "No one."

Rao Aimin sneered. "Impossible!"

Zhang Ye realized he might as well tell her. "A few days ago, I sparred and exchanged several dozen moves with the master of the Lian Family Style."

Rao Aimin looked at him. "You haven't even fully recovered from your old injuries yet you still went to spar with a martial arts master? You even exchanged several dozen moves? You're suicidal! Serves you right!"

Zhang Ye was exasperated. "My colleagues and friends had been detained by their people. When I went over to sort out the problem, they gave me face and immediately released them upon my request. After that, their master said that he would like to spar with me, so how could I turn him down? Where would I show my face if I did that! Hurry up, Old Rao, get me treated quickly!"

Rao Aimin told him, "Go to the hospital and get a checkup first."

However, the instant Zhang Ye heard the word "hospital," he panicked. "I'm not going there! I'm telling you this right now: I'm not going to the hospital!" He lay there even deader than before.

Yang Shu said anxiously, "Senior Bro, just listen to Master Rao!"

"I absolutely will not go!" Zhang Ye said firmly.

Chenchen pouted. "Zhang Ye, you're such a coward."

Zhang Ye stared at her and said, "Who's a coward? It's just that I'm too famous. If I go to the hospital, it would definitely cause a stir, understand? Forget it, a little kid like you wouldn't understand even if I explained it to you."

Chenchen smirked. "Hur hur."

No matter what anyone said, Zhang Ye would never go to the hospital.

He'd slept from yesterday until today and had almost recovered from his cold and fever. The most serious issue he currently faced were his internal injuries. He would still face this situation again in next week's competition if his internal injuries were not properly treated, and everything would be in vain. As his parents were on vacation, there was no one at home to take care of him. Zhang Ye could no longer bear with it, so he decided to head straight to Rao Aimin's place, knowing that she knew traditional Chinese medicine and [massage](#).

Rao Aimin said in a speechless manner, "Rascal, are you becoming completely dependent on me now?"

Yang Shu said anxiously, "Master Rao!"

"Alright, alright," Rao Aimin said. "I'll help you on account of you getting the injuries because of me." She then walked away and found pen and paper to write down a prescription for a traditional Chinese medicine. She handed it to Yang Shu. "Little Yang, go and pick these herbs. I've already written down the items and quantities that I need."

Yang Shu took it from her. "OK!" She turned around and said, "Senior Bro, I'll be back immediately! You must hold on!"

Zhang Ye waved his hands. "Hurry up! Take a taxi there and back! Don't go by the Third Ring Road. I got caught in traffic there when I was coming here!"

Yang Shu ran out of the house!

She slammed the door closed!

Zhang Ye laid there and made yet another request. "Old Rao, I'm hungry. Can you make some red braised pork for me? Oh yes, and chicken soup too. I must nourish myself a bit!"

Chenchen: "..."

Rao Aimin: "..."

Zhang Ye asked again, "Do you have any chicken wings? If you don't have any, can you go to the market to buy some and cook some red braised chicken wings for me? I haven't eaten those in a very long time."

Chenchen said angrily, "Zhang Ye, why are you so weak?!"

"These are internal injuries we're talking about. I can't move at all." Zhang Ye lamented, "I haven't eaten anything in a day. There's no one to take care of my meals either."

Chenchen: "..."

Rao Aimin: "..."

Zhang Ye was just going to impose himself here and lie on the sofa without moving. No matter who tried to pull him away, he would not get up. He just kept groaning and whining while asking for things to be done.

This fellow acted completely differently on and off the stage.

Sometimes, the difference between a hero and a zero was just down to a difference of circumstance.

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